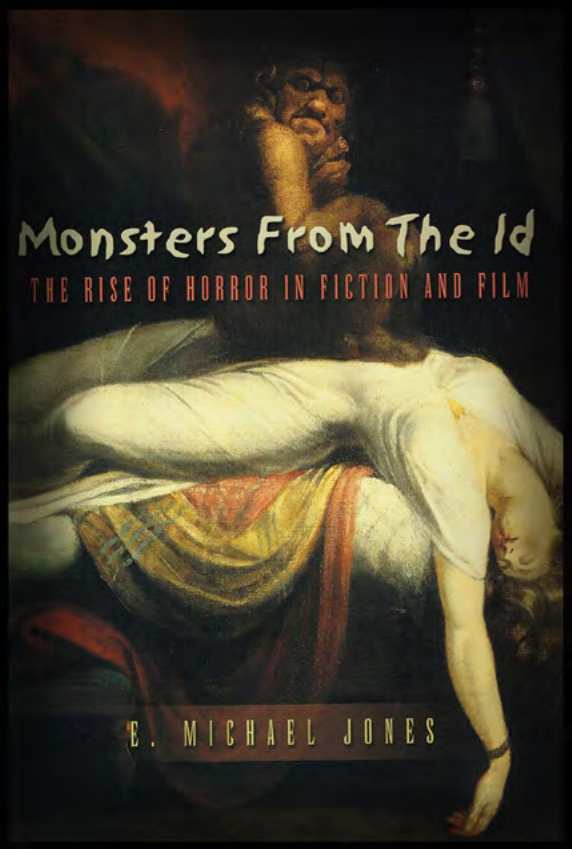
Culture Wars
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February 2021



Why is Beauty Truth?



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"The hidden history of Modernism, the history of thought control must be exposed, taught and taken to heart. One hopes that the thesis of this text, and its constituent chapters make their way into textbooks, classrooms and souls so that the next generation may get out of the uncanny house of contemporary culture and back into the clear sweet light of simple and disciplined human pleasures."

-Eugene Narrett

Culture Wars

"No social progress outside the moral order."

VOLUME 40, NO. 3



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LETTERS

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFLAGRATION

As I write this Letter to the Editor for submission to next month's *Culture Wars* it is January 11th (It doesn't feel right to say just "January" because events change so quickly), we appear to be facing a conflagration that has started in America but will consume every European nation just like the French Revolution and the Bolshevik Revolution. The only way to avoid this bloodshed is for the masses of people to understand the theses of three books of yours: *Libido Dominandi, the Jewish Revolutionary Spirit* and *Barren Metal*.

Just like we say "the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor" but know that not every Japanese agreed with it or was an active participant in it, just like we classify every event in history as "the acts of a people, in the main," the Jews, a mostly stateless nation, have deliberately caused this through a long campaign of psychological warfare and usury.

The Jews have been waging psychological warfare for some time, but were given a huge tactical weapon in the atrocity propaganda emanating from WWII. How the Jews "bloodless" warfare works is detailed in those three books.

The only way to prevent this conflagration from destroying the whole world is if the groups that have been duped into being proxy warriors for the Jews read those books and fall out of line. Simultaneously we should ban usury immediately so that the bond of charity can reemerge.

Dustin Thomas
Philadelphia, PA

THE FIGHT AGAINST IHRA-DEFINED ANTI-SEMITISM IS THE GOOD FIGHT

An Open Letter to the Catholic Bishops of the United States

Spirit and Life

"The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."
– John 6:63

In so informing the world, Our Lord gave anyone with ears to hear and eyes to see the key to discerning the difference between two competing spirits, both claiming to represent Love in action. What are these irreconcilable spirits?

There is a Divine Spirit which is defined as docility to truth (logos/Logos – the Greek word for Ultimate Reality; Truth) and there is a Satanic Spirit which is defined as resistance to known and knowable truth (rebellion to logos/Logos). The Satanic spirit is forever trying to pass itself off as the Divine Spirit; the Divine Spirit is "blasphemed against" in this way.

The Catholic Church, in Her doctrine, defines resisting the known truth as "the sin against the Holy Spirit" which Our Lord referred to as an "unforgivable sin":

> "Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, or the unpardonable sin, consists of progressive resistance to truth that ends in a final and irrevocable decision against it, deliberately made in the full knowledge that by so doing a person is choosing his own action in opposition to God's Word."

Applying the Gospel to the day, as the evangelical mandate requires us to do, allows us to appreciate that the Satanic spirit of rebellion is advanced today via the ideology of Relativism. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI saw that relativism "does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires."

In so observing, Benedict revealed Relativism's Satanic spirit of "*Non serviam*!," "I will not serve!" And what will that spirit not serve? The known and knowable truth. And with what does this Satanic spirit replace the known and knowable truth? To quote Benedict once more, "one's own ego and desires."

With what result? Death, and not Life; hatred of logos/Logos, and not love. The ancient Satanic whisper of "Ye shall be as gods" reaches man's ear today through the Relativist ideology. Relativism serves as the justification for all the death-dealing evils laying waste to today's world. Some of the more heinous examples include pornography, sodomy as marriage, genital mutilation – even of children, usury and, most notably, abortion.

Relativism was made the intellectual justification by a Catholic U.S. Supreme Court Justice (Republican-appointee Anthony Kennedy), of the 1992 *Casey vs. Planned Parenthood* decision which upheld the 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* abortion license. His judgment's relativism ran, "At the heart of liberty is the right to define for oneself the meaning of ... the mystery of human life."

Spirit and Life? The words Justice Kennedy penned were Relativist spirit and they were death – to children in the womb and the society made to tolerate what John Paul II called the "unspeakable crime." The spirit of Relativism which informed the *Casey* decision locates baby-killing solely in the eye of the

pregnant mother who wants to kill her child. If she "accuses" the child in her womb of the crime of depriving her of her liberty, then the burden of proof is placed now on the accused, the silent babe in the womb, to disprove the charge. And with the charge of liberty-denial lodged against the child being unfalsifiable, because through *Casey*'s relativist lens the charge is subjectivity-based, the child is thus guilty IF charged by his mother, because there can be no such thing as a false accusation where a thing is what I say it is. Via Relativism, abortion is irrationally redefined, to be (paraphrasing a document to be introduced shortly): "a certain perception of a child in the womb which may be defined as a woman's right to choose."

Definition and Anti-Definition. When Relativism gets to "define" acts, it does no such thing. It merely relativizes acts, subjectivizes them, denies them to be acts objectively knowable, and that on the ground of "liberty." Liberty on these terms becomes indistinguishable from tyranny.

To engage in such intellectual dishonesty is, in Catholic doctrinal terms, to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit; that Spirit Our Lord referred to as "the spirit of truth": "When He the Spirit of Truth comes he will bring all things to your mind whatsoever I have told you." (John 16:13)

Since 1973, the Supreme Court has blocked the re-criminalization of abortion in the United States based upon its willfully irrational insistence that *Relativism's* – not reason's – framework interprets the civil law with respect to the killing of children in the womb. "We are witnessing the dictatorship of relativism" Benedict announced in 2005, and the Supreme Court is helping to build this dictatorship.

The previous year, 2004, saw our government, specifically the U.S. State Department, establish the "Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism." Legislation now pends to upgrade the Envoy status to Ambassador. The Senate, (unanimously as of December 17, 2020, and to virtually non-existent media coverage, excepting specifically Jewish media outlets) and House of Representatives are poised to adopt this as the official U.S position abroad, further setting the stage for its implementation – and criminalization – at home. The upgraded status would come with increased power and money for the Envoy/Ambassador to police the globe for instances of anti-Semitism. With this legislation, premised upon a relativist reading of anti-Semitism and expected to be passed before year's end by the House of Representatives, the way is paved for the United States of America, like Europe, to criminalize, not de-criminalize (as is the case with relativism applied to abortion) anti-Semitism as defined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. The IHRA definition holds that:

> "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their

Culture Wars welcomes letters to the editor. Preference will be given to letters which deal with topics discussed in the magazine. Letters should ideally be limited to one single-spaced page, but we know how difficult it is to follow ideals in this world. Letters can be sent by fax to 574-289-1461; or by electronic mail to jones@culturewars.com.



property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

This "definition" is the very antithesis of a definition, for it locates the offense of anti-Semitism in the eye of the accuser. Like the child in the womb, an impossible burden of proof is placed upon the accused. With such a subjective understanding of anti-Semitism, there can be no such thing as a false accusation because the charge, being subjective, is unfalsifiable.

The State Department has already adopted this definition for all federal employees and is working with big tech companies who deprive, with impunity, the nation's non-oligarchs of their free speech, to put enforcement of the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism in their terms of service.

As the late, Catholic journalist Joe Sobran wrote:

> "The strength of Western law has always been its insistence on definition. Clear definitions put a burden of proof on the accuser, and properly so. We want judge and jury to know exactly what the charge means, not only to convict the guilty but, also, just as important, to protect the innocent.
>
> "By contrast, the Soviet legal system left prosecutors with a wide discretion in identifying "anti-Soviet" activities. Almost anything irritating to the Soviet state could qualify. An impossible burden of proof lay on the accused; guilt was presumed; acquittals were virtually nonexistent. To be indicted was already to be convicted. Since the charge was undefined, it was unfalsifiable; there was no such thing as a false accusation. As a result, the Russian population lived in fear."

Building the Dictatorship of Relativism. So, Relativism, the very means by which the crime of abortion is kept "safe and legal" is now being used by the same ruling class to criminalize putative anti-Semitism. Upon closer examination, what is actually being attempted is the criminalization of any speech, action or determination that certain Jews or their allies "perceive" in a "certain" way to be an instance of "hatred."

If this legislation is passed, we will be one step removed from criminalizing anti-Semitism which can land you in jail, deprived of your liberty upon the exact same terms the Supreme Court's *Casey* decision insisted make criminalization *impossible*: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define *one's own* concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." And now, at the heart of liberty also, is the right of the IHRA to define for itself the meaning of anti-Semitism. The government's taking the side of certain Jews who want to kill liberty is like King Solomon siding with the false mother and killing the baby. In other words, we are dealing with rulers with no taste for wisdom.

The *Casey* decision's relativist framework for interpreting the act of abortion functions to enshrine in law self-absorption, self-preoccupation and self-worship as lawful and just. *Casey*'s relativism implicitly teaches that one's own concept about the truth about what the child in the womb is, and not the truth about the nature of the child himself, is all that matters. Furthermore, *Casey*'s relativism implicitly teaches that the only "one" whose "own concept" counts in determining what the child in the womb is the mother *who wishes to abort the innocent child with impunity*. We are all such unborn children now. Justice Kennedy's relativism has laid the groundwork for the adoption of IHRA-brand anti-Semitism criminalization. Like the child in the womb, the "anti-Semite" will be determined solely by the Holocaust alliance's "certain perception" of any monitored member of the populace, and not the truth about the nature of anti-Semitism itself. Furthermore, the only "one" whose "own concept" of an "anti-Semite" counts in determining who an anti-Semite is, are the Holocaust Alliance members *who wish to be able to send to jail the innocent with impunity*. No other conclusion is possible where objective definitions are prohibited.

Equal Protection? In the case of IHRA-defined anti-Semitism, the relativism of the Supreme Court's "one's own concept of anti-Semitism" is based on what certain Jews and their allies say it is. To be fair, the Senate and House had better be prepared to apply equal protection and insist that those who get to define what "one's own concept of human life" means be based on what pro-lifers and their allies say it is. And while they are at it, let the government insist that what "one's own concept of anti-Catholicism" means should be reserved to what faithful Catholics and their allies say it is.

What kind of government is it that demonstrates its respect of the Jewish people by encouraging the holocaust of the unborn by not allowing pro-lifers and their allies to define for themselves anti-life acts, while unanimously cheering on certain Jews and their allies to

define for themselves anti-Semitic acts BECAUSE of the Nazi Holocaust of the Jews? Only a corrupt government.

What kind of a people, Jewish or otherwise, would wish to be so "respected"; their group's Holocaust "honored" by such politicians' lip-service, while these same politicians, on the very same terms on which they putatively excoriate the Nazi Holocaust, perpetrate another's group's holocaust – one that has been going on now for nearly fifty years? Do the Jewish people know how grievously insulted they are, as a group, by such "justice" that these certain Jews and their government allies would show them? Whatever the case, criminalizing anti-Semitism on the IHRA terms turns the *Casey* rationale for decriminalizing abortion on its head and exposes it as utterly null and void, even on its own vile terms.

Benedict Accused. In 2018, Cardinal Koch of Germany persuaded Pope Emeritus Benedict to allow the theological journal *Communio* to run an essay Benedict penned on Jewish/Catholic relations. LifeSite News ran an article on the reaction of the German Rabbinate and German Catholic Episcopacy to his essay. To quote from the LifeSite article:

> "There are other statements in Benedict's essay which have also provoked indignation among observers. First, Benedict makes it clear with regard to the Zionist project of settling in Palestine that the Catholic Church did not approve of the concept of a 'theologically grounded settlement ('*Landnahme*') in the sense of a new political Messianism.' While politically recognizing the state of Israel as such, the Vatican rejected the idea of a 'theologically grounded state, a Jewish confessional state' which understands itself as the fulfillment of divine promises ... Secondly, Pope Benedict discusses the facts of the destruction of the Jewish Temple and the scattering of the Jews further into the Diaspora in theological terms, and sees them both as a consequence of their breach of God's Covenant ... Furthermore – and more ominously – a German Rabbi, Walter Homolka, already criticized Benedict early in July, and he says that Benedict's claim that 'God's Covenant of Sinai has been replaced with Christ's Covenant' 'builds the foundation for a new anti-Semitism with a Christian foundation.'"

Under the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, how could Benedict possibly prove himself innocent of Rabbi Homolka's charge of building, "the foundation for a new anti-Semitism with a Christian foundation"? How could we, his fellow Catholics, prove our innocence if we do as he did? It is only Rabbi Homolka's perception that counts – if it accords with the IHRA's certain perception, of course.

Who can countenance such a travesty of justice, in the name of respect for a people no less, once aware of its existence? The "building of a dictatorship of Relativism" through the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism effectively checks the pope's ability to preach, menace-free, the Gospel. "If it goes so hard with the tree that is still green, what will become of the tree dried-up?" (Luke 23:31) The IHRA understanding of anti-Semitism redefines anti-Semitism to be impossible of objective identification. Only a select few possess the secret ability to determine its presence or absence. The IHRA definition, therefore, also represents the recrudescence of the old heresy of Gnosticism.

A Club to Beat us With. By subjectivizing and relativizing anti-Semitism, the Alliance weaponizes anti-Semitism and transforms Jewish suffering in the Nazi Holocaust into a club with which to beat the American people who may not be possessed of its members' and their allies' gnostic "certain perception." The American people are thereby placed into a position of fear of, and inferiority to, their Jewish fellow Americans through such IHRA-dependent legislation. In this way, an attempted stripping of our constitutional guarantee of First Amendment, equal protection and religious liberty may continue, by a new path, to proceed.

The IHRA definition, as with the 1992 *Casey* definition of abortion, denies the knowable (to all) truth about anti-Semitism. A baptized Catholic may be required to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit in order to comply with the IHRA definition. This is indistinguishable from an attempt to, *de facto*, force conversion.

All that is necessary for the dictatorship of Relativism, Benedict warned the College of Cardinals in 2005, is an immature faith:

> Today, having a clear faith based on the Creed of the Church is often labeled as fundamentalism. Whereas relativism, that is, letting oneself be "tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine", seems the only attitude that can cope with modern times. We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires.

> We, however, have a different goal: the Son of God, the true man. He is the measure of true humanism. An "adult" faith is not a faith that follows the trends of fashion and the latest novelty; a mature adult faith is deeply rooted in friendship with Christ. It is this friendship that opens us up to all that is good and gives us a criterion by which to distinguish the true from the false, and deceit from truth.
>
> We must develop this adult faith; we must guide the flock of Christ to this faith. And it is this faith – only faith – that creates unity and is fulfilled in love.

The New Normal is the Old Abnormal. Kara Inglehart is the ideal citizen under a Relativist regime. Her virtue shines through her litigating to free selfishness from the remaining chains that bind it civilly. Kara distinguished herself in this hot new trend by cooperating with the regime to falsify birth certificates. Not only that, she did so on terms which made their Relativist basis sound positively like adherence to the Moral Law:

> "Finally, transgender people from Ohio will be able to correct their birth certificates so that this necessary identity document is consistent with their gender identities," claimed Lambda Legal attorney Kara Inglehart. "Accurate birth certificates are essential. They are foundational to our ability to access a variety of benefits such as employment and housing, and to navigate the world freely and safely, as who we truly are."

And who is this "we" of whom Kara Inglehart speaks? Those who practice relativism, of course. These are our privileged citizens, put forward by the ruling class as the models for the rank and file debt slaves to emulate. Among these, only those who live solely according to their ego and desire are to be affirmed. That is what "who we truly are" means. That, in a nutshell, is in what the "new normal" consists: the regime will recognize as decent only those who subscribe to worshipping, not God, but self.

The famed French Existentialist John Paul Sartre advocated the same philosophically – nutritionless diet by prescribing to man that he live on creating his own substance (essence). Viktor Frankl, a Jewish survivor of concentration camp persecution, answered Sartre in his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*: "I do not think man creates his own essence; rather, he detects it." Frankl had a word for man's awareness of possessing a human nature not of his own making which he detects and lives out, to his great joy. The word he used was "Logotherapy."

There is no such thing as a new normal for man nor yet a new morality for him to live upon. There is only the old abnormal and immorality condoned. Conversion to living abnormally and immorally proceeds by way of mass media psychological warfare enforced by governmental and corporate corruption via lawfare and firing (from hiring) squad.

Conclusion. One who fights reality will lose. As G.K. Chesterton expressed the point so memorably, "There are an infinity of angles at which a man may fall; only one at which he stands." Our corrupt and pride-soaked, Logos-less government and corporate masters are happy to aid you in falling at any crooked angle; that's the "new content" of diversity. But just you try to stand at that 90-degree angle which God affords you – and off of which they cannot easily grow economically fat and controlling – and welcome to a world of hurt, they perversely respond in action and insolently in word.

If it is permissible for the U.S. bishops to acquiesce in the IHRA defining of anti-Semitism to mean "a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews" then, on what logical ground may the bishops not acquiesce in the *Casey* defining of abortion as "a certain perception of the child in the womb which may be defined as a woman's right to choose"? And if the legislation passes, absent their strenuous objection, will they not bear responsibility, by omission, for opening the faithful, including themselves, to a criminal charge of anti-Semitism for continued and institutional objection to abortion, which may be read then as an instance of anti-Semitism? We say nothing of their and the lay faithful's exposure to incurring the charge also for protesting Israel's treatment of Palestinians.

As this article from the *Jewish Telegraph Agency* spells out:

> "In Georgia and Alabama, even if a Jewish woman's obstetrician and psychiatrist encouraged her to terminate a pregnancy due to her psychiatric state or the health status of the fetus, and even if her rabbi told her that Jewish law fully allows her to terminate, she would be forced by law to carry the baby. It would not matter what that means for her safety or the status of the fetus – nor that it violates her religious beliefs. Strict abortion laws impinge on the religious freedom of observant Jews."

The good news is that just as we can know that abortion is not the *Casey* perception of it, so we can know that anti-Semitism is not the IHRA's perception of it. Both definitions deny the knowable truth about each attack on human life. Both relativist definitions, in theological terms, blaspheme against the Holy Spirit.

We sent the letter regarding this legislation to our senators and congressman. We hope and pray our diocese's bishop and priests will do likewise.

Dana and Thomas Pavlick
Cary, NC

BOLSHEVIK ROOTS

I have in my political library *Bolshevism in Theory and Practice*, an English translation of Dr. Joseph Goebbels' September 10, 1936 speech to the Eighth National Socialist Party Congress in Nürnberg. Let me start with a quote from the cover: "Lenin, the founder of the Bolshevik Revolution, stated that falsehoods are not only justified but have proved to be the most effective tools in the Bolshevik struggle."

Aren't falsehoods how *faux* conservatives (Neoconservatives[1]) like Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity and George W. Bush fooled the gullible, ill-informed American public into accepting the necessity of our invasion of Iraq in 2003, which benefited only Israel, its US shills and our military-industrial-congressional complex?

To return to Dr. Goebbels' speech:

> What is called Bolshevism has nothing to do with what we understand by *ideas* and an *outlook on life* (*Weltanschauung*) in general. It is nothing but a pathological and criminal kind of madness, devised by Jews, as can well be proved, and led by Jews who aim at destroying the civilized nations of Europe and at founding a Jewish-international world regime that would subject all nations to their power.
>
> Bolshevism could have had its origin only in the Jewish brain[,] and the sterile asphalt of the metropolis alone made it possible for this thing to grow and spread. It could only be accepted by a species of mankind that had been morally and economically shattered by the war and the economic crisis which followed. In such people it was let loose and was acceptable to them because its criminal and crazy doctrine appealed to them.
>
> Bolshevism is the dictatorship of the inferior. It seizes power by means of falsehoods, it maintains power by means of force ...
>
> Another problem must be settled. The problem of the role which Jewry plays in relation to Bolshevism. Only in Germany can it be openly discussed, since it would be dangerous in any other country – as was also the case in Germany not so many years ago – even to mention the Jewry by name.[2] There can be no doubt that Jews are the founders of Bolshevism and that it is they who represent it. The belief that Jews are always at perfect harmony with one another is a widespread error. They live in unity only when they form a minority that is kept in control and menaced by a large national majority. In present-day Russia this is not the case anymore. If Jews have attained power – as they have exclusively done in Russia – the old Jewish rivalries begin again, which had been kept in abeyance by the danger threatening their race.
>
> The idea underlying Bolshevism, *id est* the idea of unscrupulous disintegration and destruction of decency and culture for the diabolic purpose of destroying the nations could have been born only in the Jewish brain, just as Bolshevik practice, with all its horrifying cruelty, is only possible when manipulated by the Jews...[3]

Two other quotes from the speech: "On November 16, 1917, Lenin promised in the *Declaration of the Rights of the Nationalities* that the peoples of the former Czarist regime would be granted autonomy." (Does this sound like the empty British promises to the peoples of Mesopotamia and Persia during WWI? And did not Jews play a prominent role in English politics?) "But how did his promise work out in reality for these nationalities? On April 27, 1920, the Red Army overran Aserbeidshan, in November of the same year they overran the Ukraine, on December 3 Armenia, and on February 25, 1921 the young republic of Georgia, after Moscow had by treaty acknowledged their territorial integrity the previous year."

1 Read about Leo Strauss in *Wikipedia*. He was the founder of the Neoconservative movement and taught it to our military leaders, political elite and corporate world.

2 Look at today's Germany, France and Austria, where 'holocaust denial' is a criminal offense, or at the United States, where president Trump threatens to withhold funds from colleges where criticism of Israel is heard, and at South Carolina, where criticism of Israel has been made illegal.

3 If any reader thinks Dr. Goebbels' words are lies, I refer him to Tom Reiss's superior if somewhat left wing-biased biography

of Lev Nussimbaum, *The Orientalist*. Lev, aka Essad Bey, aka Kurban Said, who was born in Baku in October 1905, eschewed his Jewish heritage with a vengeance and converted to Islam. As Kurban Said he was the author of the sublime *roman à clef Ali and Nino*. (No, not a gay novel; Nino is a woman.) A monarchist who hated revolutions, Lev described in his novel *Blood and Oil* how the Russians overran Azerbaijan. 'During the night trainloads of Soviet soldiers had crossed the Russian-Azeri border, taken trains down to the coast, and quietly surrounded Baku. They brought the Bolsheviks' most fearsome weapon: the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counterrevolution and Sabotage, or the Cheka. These Chekists in their trademark black leather jackets, with Mauser pistols strapped to one side, would murder more people in the next five years than the czar's secret police had in the previous century ... The Cheka's preferred weapon was a small handheld machine gun that they used to mow down anyone trying to "escape." Any Ben Hecht movie scripts on those atrocities? But the *Chicago Tribune* reporter was not too squeamish to write from Berlin about, "Units of twenty-five (Spartacist) men, women and children chained to one another (and) marched across the (Moabit) prison yard," to be shot by Freikorps soldiers, during the German 1918 revolution. The Spartacists were German socialists who became the German Communist Party. Considering what was then happening in Russia, the Freikorps' actions were quite understandable.

More from the Deputy Reichsführer:

> In August 1927 the Communist propaganda apparatus drummed into the ears of the world proclamations against the executions of Sacco and Vanzetti. In millions of leaflets and newspapers the Communists carried on their campaign in foreign countries for the revocation of the death sentence. Yet, what happens in the Soviet Union itself? In paragraph 58 alone of the Criminal Code, fourteen different kinds of acts are laid down which are punishable with death. By the law of April 7, 1935, the death penalty was introduced even for children.
>
> Starving children in an educational institution have often told how good the conditions were that prevailed there in former times. This fact alone was enough to bring them within the terms of paragraph 58. Ten children were shot by the OGPU in the presence of their comrades. In a newspaper article the Soviet Prosecuting Attorney, Wilschinsky, recalls 'with content and pleasure' the first anniversary of the day on which the death penalty for children was established by law.

Do we not see the parallel between the kind of world Dr. Goebbels was describing and the horrible world the Jews are creating for us? Consider what is happening to our churches. Look at the never-ending wars the Neoconservatives have involved us in, all for the benefit of Israel. Ponder the destruction of our arts and literature. In Jewish-run California the laws against criminal pedophile acts are being watered down. Are you surprised? Weren't we warned of what was coming, by childish on-screen comments/icons such as "Aw, snap!" and "Wow!" from Silicon Valley's boy-lovers, when our computers malfunctioned? And look at the steady growth of Zionism in the Middle East. As for Jewish rivalries being resurrected when they begin to feel confident of their power, keep in mind the recent attacks by Black Lives Matter/Antifa, both Jewish (Soros)-sponsored terrorist groups, on the old Jewish section of Fairfax, Los Angeles, whose Jews, with open arms, welcomed the police as their saviors from the blacks, after railing against the former for many months for their racism against these same people.

Read in the *Jewish Journal* article by Eliyahu Lann, "Jews Cannot Be Silent in the Face of Anti-Black Racism," May 29, 2020, how schizoid Jews stick up for black terrorists (https://jewishjournal.com/commentary/opinion/316548/jews-cannot-be-silent-in-the-face-of-anti-black-racism/):

> As the Black community mourns another victim of murder by American police forces, the Jewish community must not only mourn with them. We must burn with rage with them too. The Jewish community must protest and aid the Black protesters of today – who protest their unjust murder at the hands of the police departments of America. If we do not, we are complicit in its happening.
>
> The Jewish community must protect and join those protesting today. Our lawyers must defend protesters unlawfully arrested, our medics must treat victims of police brutality, our everyday Jewish Americans from the orthodox to the secular must march with the Black community, and our Rabbis must speak just as they did in the civil rights movement. The Jewish community prides itself on its commitment to social justice, we must show up to meetings, grassroots organizations, press conferences, and protests. Being silent onlookers cannot be an option when believing in *Tikkun Olam*; in repairing the world. Rabbi Jeffery Salkin of Temple Solel stated that 'We [Jewish and Black Americans] are partners in creating a better America. We must build a better America together.'"

But as we have been informed by *Culture Wars* magazine, our police are being taught these brutal methods by the Israeli Defense Force

and Shin Bet, techniques which they employ against the real people of the Old Testament, the Palestinians. Let us start building a better world by keeping our police and military out of Israel, cutting our aid to that infernal country and mending our fences with our natural ally Iran, else we are complicit in what the *faux* Jews are doing to the indigenous peoples of the Middle East. We must burn with rage with the Palestinians. To learn more about the phony Jews, I recommend reading *The Thirteenth Tribe* by Arthur Koestler and *The Invention of Ancient Israel* by Rabbi Shlomo Sand.

A final point, a footnote to page 124 of *The Orientalist*: "France's investments in czarist Russia (as well as in the Ottoman Empire) largely account for why, although it was 'victorious' in the First World War, France in the years between 1919 and 1939 tottered on the verge of financial collapse. The Bolshevik and Turkish revolutions ruined many French investors, contributing to France's insistence on receiving massive financial reparations from Germany after 1918."

And these French losses were all Germany's fault? If anything, France and Germany – especially Germany – should be receiving reparations from the Jews. But it is far, far easier to collect from a militarily and morally defeated country that is the victim of orchestrated lies than from organized Jewry.

Roland Maruska
Withheld

FEARLESSNESS

Why does there seems to be a lack of fearlessness in our Catholic Church? This is the most frequent question I ask myself and am trying to understand. Why are Catholics and Christians so afraid? Why are Catholics and Christians so blind to the truth that you espouse about who is the enemy of the Church? Lifesite News appears to be part of (or next to) the Christendom Collage complex in Front Royal, VA near me. What is a student of history and a Catholic to do other than pray? I do believe that the gates of hell will not prevail but ... why is fear so pervasive? I see Jews all over who I really like. Simone Gold is probably the best opponent fighting the good fight against this Covid hoax. She does not appear to have any of the Talmud in her. Things could be so different if people were awake to what is happening, but they are not awake and things are not different. Please live long, you seem to be the leader of an important true Church movement.

John Burke
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LOGOS RISING

I have just finished reading *Logos Rising*. *Logos Rising* is an outstanding book in its content and span. I really enjoyed it and it clarified a lot of things in my mind. While I was aware of metaphysics and philosophy (I even read a couple of books on Plato and Aristotle) and the likes Hegel, Kant, the nominalists, *et al,* my overall understanding of the whole was rather weak. *Logos Rising* explains it all.

The last chapter becomes personal for you, as you get involved in direct contest with the forces of anti-Logos. I was only vaguely aware of the events centered around St. Mary's College, Notre Dame and South Bend. I am very glad to see that you have stood your ground in spite of the forces against you, and you are stronger now. Or maybe this happened *because* of the forces against you, as the Logos takes good out of the machinations of the wicked. Ultimately, as you write in *Logos Rising* again and again, it is about those who seek the true, and those who deny it.

More importantly, *Logos Rising* reminds the reader that Christ cannot be stopped and His ultimate victory is certain. And this is very comforting now when wickedness, lies and degeneration run amok. But their time is short.

A few years ago, I started writing reviews of good books I have read. I did it with *Barren Metal* in InfoCatolica, a well-read site in the Spanish speaking world. I will attempt to do the same with *Logos Rising*. Though the task is more challenging, given the nature of the book, I have some ideas how to approach it.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year for you and your family.

Octavio Sequeiros
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ARGENTINA

On December 22, 2020, Bishop Eduardo Taussig of the Diocese of San Rafael, Mendoza, Argentina, received a beating with closed fists at his office from one of his priests, Camilo Dib, Vicar of the parish of Nuestra Señora del Carmen at the town of Malargüe. Bishop Taussig, for a long time has alienated the esteem, love and good will of both

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FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS TO THE BACK OF THE BUS

Is the Supreme Court's TWU decision Canada's Plessy v. Ferguson?

by Caulaincourt

Canadians will be surprised to hear their country does not actually guarantee fundamental liberties like freedom of speech, freedom of association, and freedom of religion. My country, after all, repatriated its constitution from Great Britain in 1982 and took the opportunity to have Westminster add a *Charter of Rights of Freedoms*, which certainly seems to guarantee these basic rights.

Canadians are almost universally proud of their *Charter*, with current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau *liberally* and unilaterally adding layers of interpretation to it when he pronounces that the *Charter* guarantees a woman's right to an abortion. He was speaking in defence of his government's Summer Job Program that requires an "attestation" from the applicant organization that it agrees with abortion, which is very close to compelled speech. In 1988, Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) did strike down the then Federal abortion regime as arbitrary – but left it to Parliament to try again. It never did. To our PM, this was just a technicality. A majority of Canadians polled support a women's right to reproductive freedom. There can be little doubt how the SCC would rule. The recent decision of *Law Society of British Columbia v. Trinity Western University*, 2018 SCC 32 (TWU) proves our PM to be right, with some regrettable echoes back to the US Supreme Court decision of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537.

For the American reader, and many Canadians who regard our nine Supreme Court judges as our Oracles of Delphi (and thus have little interest in what the *Charter* actually says), the structural difference between the U.S. Bill of Rights, and the Canadian *Charter* are important to understand.

Take the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

The U.S. Bill of Rights has no caveat. Limits on rights require definitional qualification rather than reliance on overt external factors, such as whether a particular community is unpopular or not. Even inflammatory hate speech is protected speech, as the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Brandenburg v. Ohio,* unless the speech "is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such actions," quite a hurdle.

Now, consider the Canadian *Charter*:

> The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it *subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society*. [emphasis added]

Article 2 sets out the list of "fundamental freedoms," all of equal significance to the drafters:

> Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms: (a) freedom of conscience and religion; (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication; (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and (d) freedom of association.

Equality rights get separate treatment in Article 15, but there is nothing to suggest equality will trump fundamental freedoms:

> (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

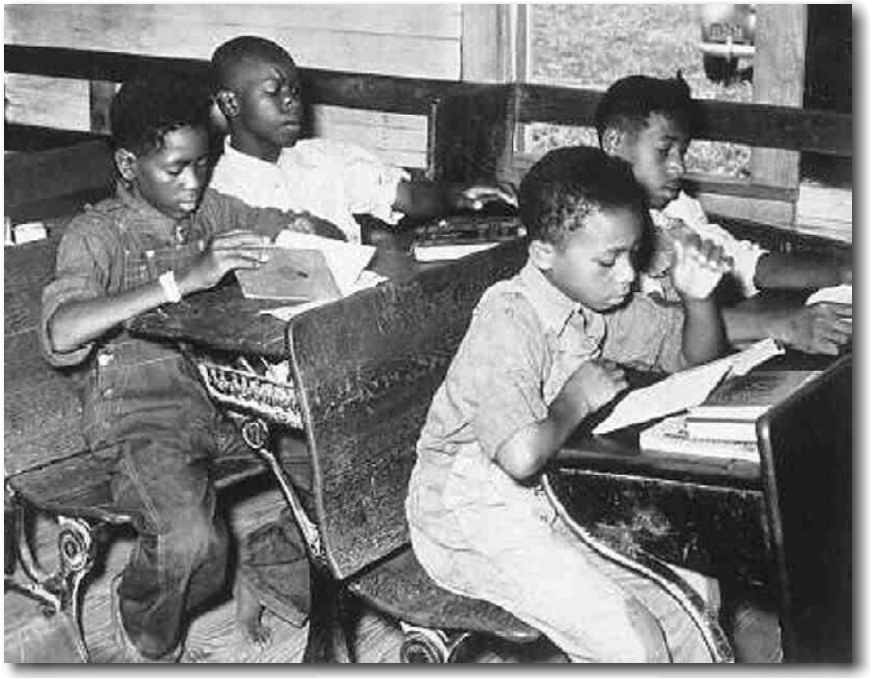


The Canadian Constitution provides the linguistic test by which a court may limit rights and freedoms. The test is whether the limit is "demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society." The language is largely indeterminate. For example, the word "democracy" has many historical and dictionary meanings, from "mob rule" (for which we can blame the excesses of the Athenian Empire) to a society that is "kind," as most Canadians and the SCC seem to use the word.

The high court has spent years trying to put meat on the bone, with fancy names like the "Oakes test" or the "Dore/Loyola framework," but the results have been equally indeterminate. As TWU illustrates, speculation and platitudes can stand in for a serious analysis. Utopian activism (what Americans now commonly refer to as "progressive") can stand in for considered review of evidence. This places the SCC in the role of mother superior of rights, slapping the wrists of forces unbending to the progressive agenda. In this sense, the nine judges of the SCC function less as oracles and more like alchemists, doubling toil and trouble, as they stir the pot, in search of the elixir for a new society.

The facts in TWU were troubling long before the SCC considered the matter. Trinity Western University is an evangelical Christian school. It is no stretch to suggest

A segregated rural school in Missouri 1938



that Evangelical Christians are not a popular community in Canada. Like Catholics, they have not bent to the dictates of post modernity.

Canada has no official religious voice in its legislatures. There is no religious party. Politicians who are Christians generally keep it to themselves. The best advice for any religious community in Canada is to stay quiet, stick to platitudes and generally stay out of the way. Trinity Western did not. It sought to add a law school to its religious-based community, a first in the modern era. In 2012, TWU submitted its proposal to the Federation of Law Societies of Canada and approval was granted – subject to the BC law society's right (the LSBC) to adopt a resolution declaring the proposed law school "not approved" (a veto).

The Trinity West proposal cast a spot light on its belief system beyond what is socially acceptable in Canada. The killer was the Community Covenant Agreement (Covenant) that all current Trinity Western students and faculty must sign. It requires community members to "voluntarily abstain" from a number of actions, including harassment, lying, cheating, plagiarism, and the use or possession of alcohol on campus. It also prohibited "sexual intimacy that violates the sacredness of marriage between a man and a women."

NO SAFE SPACE

In this age of safe spaces, one would have thought a campus where the above was respected would be a very safe space indeed, especially for young women. Canada has had its same-sex marriage debate, and such marriages are now legal. Trinity Western's Covenant was obstinate as it blessed sexual intimacy for straight married but not gay married couples.

Trinity Western is privately funded and has operated since 1969 under a statutory mandate that it must admit qualified students of "any race, colour or creed." There was no dispute the Covenant was aimed at ensuring students, even non-Christians, conduct themselves in a manner respectful of the religious object of the school. The Covenant attracted the ire of the LGBTQ community and to the majority of Canadians sympathetic to its cause. The belief itself was regarded as unacceptable in modern Canada.

The LSBC has a limited mandate in accrediting new law schools. As noted in TWU by the two dissenting SCC judges (Cote and Brown), "Under the LSBC's governing statute [the Legal Profession Act (LPA)], the only proper purpose of a law faculty approval decision is to ensure that individual graduates are fit to become members of the legal profession because they meet minimum standards of competence and ethical concerns." The LPA, section 3, also refers to the LSBC's "object and duty" to "uphold the public interest in the administration of justice by … preserving and protecting the rights and freedom of all persons." Nothing in the LPA gives the LSBC the right to make rules concerning the governance of a law school. The LSBC conceded there were no concerns about the competence of the prospective TWU law students. That should have been the end of the matter.

The Benchers of the LSBC initially planned to take no action. However, the outcry from lawyers in British Columbia against the Covenant put enormous political pressure on the Benchers. They eventually bowed to submitting the question of TWU's accreditation to a referendum of lawyers in BC, putting Trinity Western community's religious freedom to a popular vote. The question for members

was whether to direct the Benchers to pass a resolution that TWU was "not approved."

I attended the voting in person in Vancouver on June 10, 2014. The atmosphere was carnival-like, with opponents of the new law school evidently confident in the outcome. The vote was never in doubt with 3210 BC lawyers voting to direct the Benchers to veto the Christian law school, but with 968 (30%) still opposing.

The Benchers were obviously troubled by what to do next. They elected to hold a second mail in referendum on whether they should implement the resolution (one is reminded of Pontius Pilate's prevarications). The results were 5910 voting to implement and 2,088 (a slightly higher 35%) opposed. The resolution passed on October 31, 2014. Despite the LSBC's limited mandate, the sole basis for the resolution was the will of the majority.

The case then worked its way up to the SCC. TWU was successful at the BC Court of Appeal, where the court found a "severe" assault on religious freedom balanced against a "minimal" impact on LGBTQ persons. The LSBC appealed. The SCC TWU decision was delivered on June 15, 2018. The majority of Abella, Moldaver, Karakatsanis, Wagner, Gascon JJ., Rowe J. (separate reasons) and the Chief Justice McLaughlin (also in separate reasons), all had no difficulty overturning the BCCA decision and upholding the resolution of the LSBC.

The majority rejected what seemed obvious, that the LSBC had boldly exceeded its mandate and timidly fettered its discretion. The majority used the LSBC's duty to act in the "public interest" to give it powers nowhere expressly stated in its statutory mandate:

> [31] In our view, LPA requires the Benchers to consider the overarching objective of protecting the public interest in determining the requirements for admission to the profession, including whether to approve a particular law school
>
> [34] As the governing body of a self-regulating profession, the LSBC's determination of the manner in which its broad public interest mandate will best be furthered is entitled to deference. The public interest is a broad concept and what it requires will depend on the particular context.

Despite the fact there are 19 secular law schools in Canada, no religious ones, and no evidence of likely harm to any LGBTQ persons (except morally), the majority noted:

> [39] …The LSBC was entitled to be concerned that inequitable barriers on entry to law schools would effectively impose inequitable barriers on entry to the profession and risk decreasing diversity within the bar…

The majority accepted that "an entire law school would be closed off to the vast majority of LGBTQ people…. LGBTQ individuals would have fewer opportunities relative to others. This undermines true equality of access to legal education, and, by extension, the legal profession." The LSBC was therefore to be commended for "preventing the risk of significant harm to LGBTQ people who attend TWU's proposed law school." The majority never explains why 60 new law school spaces at Trinity Western do anything more than *add* to the total spaces available to prospective law students. Presumably, the 60 new spaces at Trinity Western would be attractive to Christians who may be equally uncomfortable in what to them may be the oppressive, secular, politically-correct atmosphere in Canadian universities. LGBTQ students could access these vacated spots, having no interest in attending an Evangelical Christian law school. The elephant in the room is that students who enjoy and wish to continue to enjoy pre-marital sex, or steal or plagiarize, etc. (a community much larger than the LGBTQ one) would be equally uncomfortable with the Covenant.

The Benchers eventually bowed to submitting the question of TWU's accreditation to a referendum of lawyers in British Columbia, putting Trinity Western community's religious freedom to a popular vote.

The Chief Justice's reasons are particularly unsettling. The five majority judges considered the impact on religious freedom minimal. Justice Rowe didn't see any breach of religious freedom at all. The Chief Justice alone among the majority recognized that a "sig-

nificant" violation of freedom of conscience and religion is occurring here. Her eyes are wide open. She writes: "The decision places a burden on the TWU community's freedom of religion: (1) by interfering with a religious practice (a learning environment that conforms to its members' beliefs); (2) by restricting their right to express their beliefs through that practice; and (3) by restricting their ability to associate as required by their beliefs." She even questions whether barring the new religious law school contributes anything towards diversity, "given its comparatively high tuition fees, and [the question] how many, if any, LGBTQ students will be forced to go to TWU as a school of last resort…"

EYES WIDE SHUT

The balance of the Chief's reasons could be scripted to Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*. She abruptly concludes that equality of the LGBTQ community trumps religious freedom: "In my view, the most compelling law society objective is the imperative of refusing to condone discrimination against LGBTQ people," arguably giving the LGBTQ community a constitutional veto over other communities. Her language suggests the subversive belief represented by the Covenant was itself noxious: "The Covenant singles out LGBTQ people as less worthy of respect and dignity than heterosexual people, and reinforces negative stereotypes against them." The LSBC was right not to "condone" discrimination and stop a practice that might have "negative consequences for the LGBTQ community, diversity and the enhancement of equality in the profession." Why this veto power of the state granted in this case to the LSBC could not be used to control statements of belief and compel speech in all private religious elementary and high schools is not at all clear.

The Supreme Court of Canada



The majority never contemplates a decision outside of the Christian context or asks why any law school with a differing religious culture at its core would not increase diversity. Presumably, if the applicant school were Muslim or Sikh, one would expect a covenant that prayers be respected, even by non-Muslims, or that a covenant to ensure non-Sikh students understand how to be respectful while navigating the community. The entirely Christian focus of the TWU decision reflects a distinctly western secular bias against the previously dominant religion. The obvious question of broader application is never addressed, by reason of implicit bias or embarrassment.

The majority considered it "reasonable for the LSBC to conclude that promoting equality by ensuring equal access to the legal profession, supporting diversity within the bar, and preventing harm to LGBTQ law students were valid means by which the LSBC could pursue its overarching statutory duty…," which included "upholding a positive public perception of the legal profession." Trinity Western's Covenant was bad PR to the law society. The majority found the limit on freedom reasonable, a proportionate balancing between the limitation on the religious protections and the implicit statutory objectives of the LSBC.

So where are the echoes to *Plessy v. Ferguson*? The resonance over the centuries is in the majority's rather crude deference to "public interest" and to its willingness to override express *Charter* rights and freedoms if they offend nebulous and evolving cultural forces, what it calls "fundamental shared values."

Plessy v. Ferguson is considered one of the most odious decisions in U.S. Supreme Court history. It upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation laws for public facilities as long as the segregated facilities were equal in quality – a doctrine that came to be known as "separate but equal." In 1890, the state of Louisiana passed the *Sep-*

arate Car Act, which required separate accommodations for blacks and whites on railroads, including separate railway cars. Plessy, who was born a free man bought a first class ticket and sat in the white's only car.

Now, it goes without saying, Blacks in the southern U.S. in 1890 were not a *privileged* class, standing as an examplar to any unpopular community. It would have made a mockery of the U.S. Bill of Rights to put Plessy's equality rights to a vote. It was no less an outrage for the LSBC to put the rights of a minority religious community to the same.

Blacks in the southern U.S. in 1890 were not a privileged class, standing as an examplar to any unpopular community. It would have made a mockery of the U.S. Bill of Rights to put Plessy's equality rights to a vote.

The majority opinion was written by Justice Henry Billings Brown and the lone dissent written by Justice John Marshall Harlan. In response to the argument Louisiana was exercising its "police power" in an improper way, Justice Brown adopted a similar deferential approach adopted by our SCC in TWU:

> The reply to all this is that every exercise of the police power must be reasonable, and extend only to such laws as are enacted in good faith for the promotion for the public good, and not for the annoyance or oppression of a particular class.
>
> So far, then, as a conflict with the Fourteenth Amendment is concerned, the case reduces itself to the question whether the statute of Louisiana is a reasonable regulation, and, with respect to this, there must necessarily be a large discretion on the part of the legislature. *In determining the question of reasonableness, [the state] is at liberty to act with reference to the established usages, customs, and traditions of the people, and with a view to the promotion of their comfort and the preservation of the public peace and good order.* Gauged by this standard, we cannot say that a law which authorizes or even requires the separation of the two races in public conveyances [p551] is unreasonable, or more obnoxious to the Fourteenth Amendment than the acts of Congress requiring separate schools for colored children in the District of Columbia, the constitutionality of which does not seem to have been questioned, or the corresponding acts of state legislatures. [emphasis added]

The dissenting opinion of Justice Harlan was a caution to Americans, but it sounds equally as a caution to our overreaching SCC:

> If a State can prescribe, as a rule of civil conduct, that whites and blacks shall not travel as passengers in the same railroad coach, why may it not so regulate the use of the streets of its cities and towns as to compel white citizens to keep on one side of a street and black citizens to keep on the other? Why may it not, upon like grounds, punish whites and blacks who ride together in streetcars or in open vehicles on a public road [p558] or street? Why may it not require sheriffs to assign whites to one side of a courtroom and blacks to the other? And why may it not also prohibit the commingling of the two races in the galleries of legislative halls or in public assemblages convened for the consideration of the political questions of the day? Further, if this statute of Louisiana is consistent with the personal liberty of citizens, why may not the State require the separation in railroad coaches of native and naturalized citizens of the United States, or of Protestants and Roman Catholics?
>
> The answer given at the argument to these questions was that regulations of the kind they suggest would be unreasonable, and could not, therefore, stand before the law. Is it meant that the determination of questions of legislative power depends upon the inquiry whether the statute whose validity is questioned is, in the judgment of the courts, a reasonable one, taking all the circumstances into consideration? A statute may be unreasonable merely because a sound public policy forbade its enactment. *But I do not understand that the courts have anything to do with the policy or expediency of legislation*. A statute may be valid and yet, upon grounds of public policy, may well be characterized as unreasonable.
>
> … There is a dangerous tendency in these latter days to enlarge the functions of the courts by means of judicial interference with the will of the people as expressed by the legislature. Our institutions have the distinguishing characteristic that the

three departments of government are coordinate and separate. Each must keep within the limits defined by the Constitution. And the courts best discharge their duty by executing the will of the lawmaking power, constitutionally expressed, leaving the results of legislation to be dealt with by the people through their representatives. … *however [a statute is] construed, the intent of the legislature is to be respected, if the particular statute in question is valid, although the courts, looking at the public interests, may conceive the statute to be both unreasonable and impolitic*. If the power exists to enact a statute, that ends the matter so far as the courts are concerned. …

… Our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law. … It is therefore to be regretted that this high tribunal, the final expositor of the fundamental law of the land, has reached the conclusion that it is competent for a State to regulate the enjoyment by citizens of their civil rights solely upon the basis of race.

Likewise, Trinity Western's Covenant may not be reasonable or socially acceptable to the moderns, but this is no business of the court. I do recognize the irony of pointing out similarities in thinking between a case that sought to keep people apart, and a decision that forceably imposes sameness in the name of "diversity." However, if you hitch your constitution to the wagon of majoritarianism, rights are just words. The white supremacist platitudes of *Plessy* reflect the attitudes of the day, no less than the platitudes of the Canadian SCC about "true equality," "diversity" and uncomfortable speech represent the platitudes of our day. Law societies now have power to unplug any law school that governs itself contrary to the politics of the day. Will the next target be unpopular books, even the dusty ones, unpopular associations, unpopular faculty members?

The majority decision also suggests Trinity Western should be happy with a less than "optimum" freedom, much as blacks were asked to accept a travel environment chosen for them by the state.

Law societies now have power to unplug any law school that governs itself contrary to the politics of the day.

The dissent of SCC judges Cote and Brown, with its Jeffersonian eloquence, stands as a stern rebuke to the three majority opinions. The dissent concludes that the LSBC acted as a mere rubber stamp of the majority of voting BC lawyers and abdicated its duty by deferring to a popular vote. The Benchers did not decide anything, they bowed to the majority: "…it is, with respect, pure historical revisionism to suggest that the Benchers believe their decision would benefit from guidance or support of the membership as a whole."

The dissent also found the majority's relying on *Charter* values to block a Christian law school "troubling." *Charter* values (much like *Plessy*'s "usages, customs, and traditions of the people") are "amorphous and, just as importantly, undefined … What is troubling … is the imposition of judicially preferred 'values' to limit constitutionally protected rights, including the right to hold other values."

The dissent notes the majority seems to confuse "equality" with uniformity: "…[E]quality in an absolute sense is also perfectly compatible with a *totalitarian state*, being easier to impose where freedom is limited" [emphasis added], strong language in Canada.

Tyranny of the majority is bad enough. The real tragedy of the TWU decision is the blemish to the legal profession. If any of the nation's communities should have been alive to a ground swell of intolerance it should have been its lawyers. Not so, they were swept along by a just cause. The decision also highlights the danger of entrenching limits on rights in the form of the *Charter*'s Article 1. A shrewd judiciary ought to have interpreted fundamental freedoms broadly and restrictions on those freedoms in the most narrow possible way. Regrettably, what we have in Canada is the imperilment of rights and freedoms by an activist court wielding the enormous power of Article 1. It is difficult to feel much comfort anymore in the *Charter*'s vaunted guarantees.



Endnotes Available by Request or Online at www.CultureWars.com

ABORTION LAW IN ARGENTINA

A JEWISH OPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT OF POPE FRANCIS

by Luis Alvarez Primo

On October 2018 I wrote an article for *CW* with the title "A victory in the Culture Wars in Argentina" on the failure of the pro-abortion Jewish death squad to legalize abortion then (I gave a list of more than fifty Jewish pro-abortion leading activists and institutions). In December 2020, the same article could have been published with just a minor change of title, "Defeat in the Culture Wars in Argentina," and hardly any changes in its content, for the pro-abortion actors, mostly Jewish, and the lobbying operations and the funding and the fallacies on the pro-abortion side as well as the cynicism and ominous clerical silence of most bishops, presumably on the pro-life side, were the same. In 2018 everybody in the prolife camp knew that victory was an absolutely provisional one, for the forces of the culture of death would come back at once with a vengeance, bloodthirsty and heavily financed by the same sponsors as usual. That is exactly what happened. However, despite of it all, things could have been different but for one simple factor: if Pope Francis had spoken *urbi et orbi* clearly and firmly against the abortion law in his own country of birth, to which he owes his own career, and which, by the way, he has never visited as a Pope. The question still remains: Why did Pope Francis not say a word against the abortion law in Argentina? Why did he not allow any of the bishops in Argentina to say a word against abortion, let alone organize any serious opposition campaign, which, again, with Francis' intervention would have been utterly unnecessary?

On December 30, 2020 the abortion "law" was passed in Argentina. Now any innocent child can be legally murdered in his mother's womb before the 14th week of pregnancy and, in case of rape, until the 9th month. This murderous positive law not only is not a law because it contradicts natural law and is unjust against the innocent person of the child in his mother's womb whom it should protect, but also is blatantly unconstitutional in the juridical system of Argentina whose Constitution establishes the protection and defense of human life since conception.

That Pope Francis is a player for the Culture of Death is a fact beyond the shadow of a doubt for those who have eyes to see. However relevant to our main concern here, it is not the purpose of this article to discuss Francis's promotion of heresies, a homosexual culture, idolatric cults like the Pachamama, and his demolition of the traditional moral doctrines and the liturgy of the Catholic Church. Here I wish to recall some of the names directly associated with Francis's acceptance and promotion of the culture of death as part of his promotion of the antichristian, secularist, pantheistic masonic agenda of the worldly powers, that is, Jewish power, whose agent he had become before he was chosen Pope with the support of Rabbi Skorka, the International Jewry and Rabbinate and when he accepted Shimon Peres's syncretistic Judeo masonic offer in Rome to lead a UN of all religions. Since then, with the aid of sinister and corrupt Msgr. Sánchez Sorondo, Parolin and others, Francis has promoted abortion in subtle political idiosyncratic ways.

In 1992, I attended the first World Conference on Sustainable Development of the United Nations in Río de Janeiro, Brazil, the so called ECO'92. Actually, I attended an alternative mini ECO'92 against the official one. The main geopolitical goal of that UN conference was to launch a world-wide program to reduce global population, a new international antichristian pantheistic "ethics" and a plan for global governance based on the Earth Charter neatly deposited in the Earth Arch. The flagship of the conference was Paul Ehrlich's infamous 1969 book "The Population Bomb."

Pope Francis and Jeffrey Sachs standing at the desk of Sanchez Sorondo



Paul Ehrlich, as Stephano Gennarini of the Center for Family and Human Rights called him, is the Jewish "high priest of the culture of death,"[1] a thoroughly discredited scientist and an "irrepressible doomster," dedicated to promote anti demographic terrorism through false statics, bogus predictions and unjust policies against the poor which include forced abortion, prenatal sex selection, female infanticide, and forced sterilization. Nevertheless, in February 2017, Ehrlich was invited to speak at a Vatican Conference by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences.

Another regular visitor and advisor to Msgr. Sanchez Sorondo and Pope Francis is the Jewish economist Jeffrey David Sachs, the world's foremost proponent of population control and abortion as a way to reduce fertility. In this capacity, Sachs moderated and co-hosted a Vatican Conference on climate change in April 2015. In his book *Commonwealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet* Sachs advocates "legalizing abortion as a cost-effective way to eliminate 'unwanted children' when contraception fails and he describes abortion as a "lower-risk and lower-cost option" than bringing a new human life to the world.

AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE

Of course, in this unholy alliance with Francis/Sánchez Sorondo, George Soros, the Jewish financier, could not be missing in the visitors list to Santa Marta. Soros funds the most radical feminist pro-abortion groups all over the world as well as the radical PICO (People Improving Communities through Organizing) which held its meeting in California in February 2017 with support of the Vatican.[2]

In keeping with Francis's unnatural, progressive diplomacy, of which he controls all the "nuts and bolts," we can also recall Francis's decoration to Lilian Ploumen, the international abortion activist, founder of "She decides," with the Order of St. Gregory award. Also we recall his praising of Emma Bonino, Italy's leading proponent of abortion.

Francis's recent welcome to Mrs. Forrester de Rothschild and a group of representatives of usurious capitalism at the Vatican, which they now call "inclusive capitalism," inclusive save for the unwanted, completes the unholy alliance of which the Holy See under Francis has openly become a part.

With this background, it is not difficult to understand why Francis gave the green light for an abortion law in Argentina as demanded by the worldly powers, to both puppet Argentine President Alberto Fernández and his Vice President Cristina Elizabeth Wilhelm Fernandez de Kirchner (alias the thief, "*la ladrona*") when they visited him at Santa Marta.

The leading voice of the pro-abortion campaign during the recent "debate" which ended in the abortion law of Dec. 30, 2020, in Argentina, was former Minister of Health, Dr. Adolfo Rubinstein, who represents IPPF interests together with Dr. Pedro Cahn, President of Fundación Huésped. Not surprisingly, both these two Jewish representatives of the worldly powers of the culture of death are also the main spokesmen for the Covid–19 scam and the big business of the transgenic experiment for population control that is being implemented under the guise of a Covid vaccine in Argentina … also with the support of Judaized Pope Francis, who has diligently reminded vaccinators the world over: "don't forget the poor."[3]

ENDNOTES

1. https://stream.org/paul-ehrlich-vatican/
2. https://onepeterfive.com/pope-francis-praises-soros-funded-organization-encourages-resistance/
3. See "Covid -19 and the Jewish Revolutionary Spirit," CW, October 2020

EMERITA PROFESSOR ANNE BARBEAU GARDINER (1938-2020)

A Tribute by John Beaumont

Many readers of *Culture Wars* will know the name of Anne Barbeau Gardiner, who died suddenly at her home in Brewster, NY, on October 19, 2020. Over several years Anne wrote articles of great quality for *Culture Wars*. But then she wrote so many books, articles and book reviews for many publications. A glance at an academic website revealed no fewer than 176 items under her name. Already, at least two major journals have published tributes to her. I wish to do the same here, particularly since Anne's great humility and self-effacing nature has resulted in her not being as well known as she should have been. As a mutual friend of ours once wrote to me, "She is that rare combination of a great intellect coupled with modesty and real Catholic devotion."

Anne Marie Therese Barbeau was born in Manchester, NH, on June 27, 1938. Anne attended Catholic elementary (French-Canadian) schools in the Manchester area, and graduated from Villa Augustina Academy (Goffstown, NH). She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of New Hampshire-Durham, and in 1968 a doctorate degree in English Literature from the City University of New York (CUNY). Anne was a Professor (later an Emerita Professor) of English Literature at City University of New York from 1970 until her retirement in 1996. Anne married Thomas (Tom) J. Gardiner in July 1980, at St. Gregory-the-Great Church in New York City. Anne and Tom were married for only seventeen years. He died in June, 1997. Anne lived near Brewster by herself for the last twenty-three years of her life.

I first met Anne in 2009. I had worked for five years with the eminent priest/physicist Father Stanley Jaki. Anne was a friend of his and had corresponded with him over several years. When he died in 2009, I informed Anne, whom I had never met, of his death and this led to a long correspondence with her right up until her death. A smile comes to my face when I think of how she always addressed her e-mails to me as coming from "your sister in Christ." I had the privilege of meeting her both in my own home country of England (she visited Oxford most years in order to do research in the Bodleian Library) and in the United States. During that time I had the benefit of much good advice relating to my own writings and her wonderful conversational skills. She wrote very detailed but very generous reviews of my two books on converts to the Catholic faith.

Regarding the faith itself, I am in awe of her truly Catholic integrity, product of a truly Catholic education. She herself expressed it in an e-mail to me on one occasion:

> All my ancestors were Catholic. Jean-Francois Barbeau, the first one to come to Quebec in the 1680s, came as an officer from Pons (southern France, near Spain) to fight the American English! And I was raised by French nuns in a French boarding school in Hudson, New Hampshire, where 17th-century Catholicism was seen as the golden age! Honestly, I never knew a Protestant till I was around eighteen.

When in full health Anne was a daily communicant at her local church and offered up her rosary every day. The wife of a friend of mine thinks Anne Gardiner may have been the most Christ-like person she's ever met. I'm afraid I'm definitely not qualified to say, but I certainly wouldn't disagree.

Anne was a distinguished, prolific and passionate writer and author. Her two main books were published by distinguished firms. The first, *Intellectual Design of John Dryden's Heroic Plays* by Yale University Press in 1970, the second, *Ancient Faith and Modern Freedom in John Dryden's The Hind and the Panther*, the story of Dryden's conversion, by Catholic University of America Press in 1998. Over a period of fifty years, she wrote hun-

Dr. Anne Barbeau Gardiner



dreds of articles related to English writers, such as Milton and Swift, as well as on Catholicism generally and Catholics of the seventeenth century. Her articles and reviews were published in many journals, such as the *Cambridge Review*, *Latin Mass Magazine*, *New Oxford Review*, *First Things*, *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Quarterly*, *Christian Order*, and, of course, *Culture Wars*. In 2020 she continued to submit articles for publication and some remain to be published. Prior to 2010 Anne was also on many panels at national and international conferences. She was also made a life member of the Royal Stuart Society in my country in recognition of her lectures and articles supporting the Jacobite cause.

It is both the depth and the range of subject areas on which Anne published, which is astonishing. The following topics will give some indication of this, note the following, all the subject of detailed analysis by her: The First Crusade; St. John Fisher; Dante; St. John Henry Newman; the Japanese Martyrs. In addition, I was always amazed at how she could face reviewing some dreadful texts on such things as so-called Catholic feminism, abortion, and what she referred to in the title of one article as "Transgenderism's Wicked Lies." She pitched into a critique of Islam on several occasions, put forward objections to certain aspects of Darwinism, showed up the naivety of such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, and criticized the approach of a number of Catholic dissenters. She tackled the older heresiarchs, Martin Luther and John Calvin. Another prime target was the subject of eugenics and notably the figure of Margaret Sanger. Anne was also prepared to tell the truth about the crisis in the Catholic Church today. While recognizing the importance of papal authority, she was understandably concerned about the many ambiguities in Pope Francis's statements. She also fully understood a principal cause of the problems in the Church, namely the influx of clerical homosexuality within the higher ranks of the Church. In this context she reviewed very positively a new translation of St. Peter Damian's preaching against priestly homosexual activity in his *Book of Gomorrah*. As can be seen from the last title, Anne was never hesitant about tackling unsavory topics, such was her zeal for the truth. This explains her article in the *New Oxford Review* entitled "Why Does Dante Consider Sodomy Worse than Homicide and Suicide?"

Anne was also a contributor to weighty academic texts, notably *Restoring Nature: Essays in Thomistic Philosophy and Theology*, a symposium containing contributions from such eminent figures as Fr. Benedict Ashley, William E. Carroll, and Ralph McInerny. Before her death Anne finished a review of *Clerical Sexual Misconduct: An Interdisciplinary Analysis*, edited by Jane F. Adolphe and Ronald J. Rychlak, which she judges as outstanding and "a frank, no-holds-barred approach to the homosexual priests' crisis." She applauds the way it "deals honestly with the causes of the homosexual crisis of priests in the Catholic Church preying on adolescent young men mainly of ages 13 to 17." The review will be published in due course. She had

"If ... a convert hath an occasion also offered him of leaving Father or Mother, Friends or Fortunes ... his Reputation and good Name ... if he purposeth to arrive at perfection; for a true enlightened Judgment, I say, will here consider: that this is one of the greatest Honours that his Divine Majesty could do him upon earth, and a happiness next to Martyrdom."

also finished translating a booklet from the French for the author, a nun, Sister Francoise Breynaert on the Second Coming, addressed to Muslims. The booklet is coming out in French and in English very soon.

For several decades, Anne was involved extensively in ministering and advocating for dozens of individuals on death row in many states. A nun suggested that ministry to her and became Anne's mentor. Anne engaged some correspondents for more than ten years! Anne would write letters to editors and initiate contact with state officials on matters related to inadequate services or insufficient, inadequate or questionable legal representation, as well as questionable action or inaction by prosecutors. Even though in her last year or so she was limited to the home, she continued her ministry of correspondence with 31 prison inmates until her death. The week before she died, she joyfully received the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion.

Let me finish by quoting two passages that I received from Anne, both hopefully highly relevant. The first relates to the subject on which I have written much, namely conversions to the Faith, and ends with some good advice on living:

> Did I send you this beautiful passage from Abraham Woodhead on the steep cost of conversion: "If yet further, by reason of the persecution of such a Religion in the place where he lives, such a convert hath an occasion also offered him of leaving Father or Mother, Friends or Fortunes, and among the rest not the least, his Reputation and good Name, in being esteemed a Turncoat, an Apostate, a Seducer, to embrace again, in the Religion he turns to, nothing but Crosses and Fastings, Confessions and Penances, Resignation of Judgment, strict obedience to the Church's, as well as God's Laws, and many more hardships set before him, if he purposeth to arrive at perfection; for a true enlightened Judgment, I say, will here consider: that this is one of the greatest Honours that his Divine Majesty could do him upon earth, and a happiness next to Martyrdom." (from *Considerations on the Council of Trent* [1671], p 248)
>
> I get chills whenever I reread this passage. Another thing he wrote that I can never forget is that one should never justify himself when he is criticized, even if that criticism is wrong, for he might discourage the other person from criticizing him again and thereby lose a source of amendment. (What an example of humility!). A third thing he taught me is that when something is an inconvenience to you, but a necessity for another, you must do it.

The second is on the subject of death itself. Anne referred to this in an e-mail in a way that summed up her own thoughts and which I find very moving:

> I was just rereading Browning's poem "Prospice" this morning, before sending it to one of my correspondents on death row. What Browning says here about resolve and fortitude applies to the last part of our lives, not just to the process of dying. Like him, I don't want to be drugged when I die: "I would hate that Death bandaged my eyes ... and made me creep past." This stance is so much better than Dylan Thomas's "Do not go gently into that good night, Rage, rage against the dying of the light." I suppose one might say Browning's is a "muscular Christianity," but hey, that's what we need today!
>
> *Requiescat in pace.*

LETTERS

Continued from Page 9

ordinary lay Catholics in San Rafael, Mendoza, and of most of the priests of the Diocese of San Rafael. Bishop Taussing has dedicated himself to persecuting pious lay Catholic teachers and priests who respectively take and give communion in the mouth and kneeling. Furthermore, a few months ago, he closed the seminary "Santa María Madre de Dios" with more than 40 seminarians, for the same liturgical practice and love of Catholic orthodoxy. The Catholic people of San Rafael were very proud of a seminary built with the support of the community, which gave identity to their town and Province. Not long ago there was a demonstration against the authoritarian modernist policies of Bishop Taussig (a Jewish name). The Bishop blamed Reverend Father Dib for supporting his flock at the demonstration in Malargüe and called on him to explain himself, after forbidding Father Dib to celebrate any sacraments. Exasperated by the unfatherly manners of the cynical bishop at the meeting, Father Dib reacted with holy ire and did what Saint John Chrysostom prescribed for heresiarchs: a good beating in the mouth.

Luis Alvarez Primo
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FEATURE

THE HINDU GOLDEN AGE

BY NARENDRA GANDHI

THE FOG OF HISTORICAL WAR. How does the Indian past account for normative economic thought in modern-day India? In particular, the wide-scale acceptance of the alchemical notion that gold or money rather than labor is the source of value, leading to the devaluing of labor, the idea that cheap labor is an asset, and ultimately the hawking of cheap Indian labor on the international market as if it were like any other commodity. How does the Indian past also account for the conspicuous absence of the critique of the cheap labor strategy despite all the failure that has come from the slavish pursuit of it?

The trouble is any attempt to understand how the Indian past explains the present immediately runs into the problem of Indian history being a battleground for two competing narratives. According to Hindu nationalists, the first chapter of the subcontinent's history begins in ancient times when the influence of a uniformly Hindu civilization cultivated a people who were more virtuous, civic-minded, and generally enlightened than their latter-day counterparts. In turn, this meant poverty was mostly unknown, people lived in harmony with the environment, and that in general life was less complicated.

The emergence of the term Hindu coincides with the time that the Muslim communities, whose members coined the term, had established themselves in the subcontinent.

But according to the pro-secular political opponents of Hindu nationalism, the so-called Hindu Golden age is nothing more than a myth designed to bring about the political mobilizations they seek. They argue the imagined glories of the Hindu past serve to beguile Hindus into following the nationalists' banner. While the idea that the subcontinent was once a land of Hindus serves to justify the Hindu nationalist goal of doing away with India's pluralistic, secular state, and replacing it with a Hindu state, what the nationalists refer to as a "Hindu Rashtra."

According to the secularists, if such as state were to come into being, the outcome would be preferential treatment for Hindus, and everyone else would become second-class citizens, if not oppressed minorities. With this in mind, India's high-profile historians, who like most establishment academics are closely aligned with the pro-secularist cause, have not been idle.

Instead, led by spokespeople such as Romila Thapar, Professor Emeritus of Ancient Indian History at Jawaharlal Nehru University, they have been waging a robust and wide-ranging assault on the Hindu Golden Age narrative. For many pro-secularists Thapar is the greatest historian ever produced by the Republic of India. And her outspoken assault of the Golden Age narrative has made her a *bête noire* in the eyes of Hindu nationalists.

For example, Thapar never tires of pointing out that the very word Hindu as a term of religious affiliation does not even occur in Indian sources until late in the 14th century A.D.[1] Furthermore, Thapar argues that rather than denoting a single monolithic religion with

Ellora Caves, Maharashtra, India



a uniform system of belief, Hinduism is best understood as an umbrella term for "a variety of sects, belief systems and ritual practices."[2]

Thus, essentially the organizing principle of her critique is an assault on the very idea of continuity between the Hindu past and present, upon which the Hindi nationalist narrative depends.

> For the vast majority of people religion was an open-ended experience-a mixing, merging, overlapping, borrowing or rejecting of forms ideas beyond formal labels. Religion for [the] larger population lay in forms of personal devotion, in the worship of spirits within trees and mountains, nagas, yakshis and ancillary deities of local cult shrines, in listening to the words of the bhikkus and the Nayannars and Alvars, the Bhakti and Sufi teachers, to the stories retold from the epics and Puranas, and to the conversations of those who congregated around gurus, faqirs, pirs, and other 'holy men', agreeing or disagreeing on the essentials of understanding the purpose of life and the meaning of death. There were the grand temples, mosques and churches to be visited for prayers, except the temples were not open to all. Ritual and belief, because they mixed caste practices and the norms of one's sect, differed among communities that we now refer to as Hindu.[3]

As for those who point to all the continuity in ritual, beliefs, and practices to be found in Hindu religious text down through the ages, Thapar is quick to point out that appearances can be deceiving, given the divergence between documented evidence and what was actually being practiced.

> The religion (Hinduism) is however among the most ancient but with a remarkable continuity in some of its features, unlike others. The study of what is regarded as Hindu philosophy and its religious text and beliefs has been so emphasized as to almost ignore those who are the practitioners of these tenets, beliefs, rituals and ideas.[4]

But in reality what appears to be a fairly solid and reasonable argument, is anything but. To start with, Thapar fails to address the argument that Hindus would simply not have needed a term to differentiate themselves with other groups, and vice versa, other than to refer to them as foreigners and barbarians, until such time as both communities were living side by side. Thus, the emergence of the term Hindu coincides with the time that the Muslim communities, whose members coined the term, had established themselves in the subcontinent, and were living among the adherents of pre-existing beliefs.

Furthermore, as with India's economic commentators and their blindness to the relationship between low wages and low productivity, once again we have a crude material calculus at work. In this case, Thapar's inability to look beyond differences in belief, ritual and documentary evidence to realize that what she

takes for granted, i.e. the widescale acceptance of a polytheistic religious landscape, is itself evidence of enormous continuity at the level of the shared philosophical beliefs that underpin the culture.

For the same reason, it's reasonable to assume that despite differences in belief, ritual, and even language, a traveller from the far north of the subcontinent to its uttermost south would feel no more out of place than an Englishmen during the middle ages who found himself in a far flung corner of Christendom – particularly when the shared mythology and canon of literature that Thapar refers to is taken into account.

Meanwhile, Thapar can't help but acknowledge still more continuity when she decries the "centrality of caste" throughout the subcontinent's past.[5] The same

Hindu lawgivers, unlike their 21st century counterparts, had not forgotten that economics is a school of moral philosophy.

is true when Thapar admits that since ancient times a brahmin priest caste has continuously been present asserting their moral authority – a fact that is impossible to deny given they are mentioned in travelogues going back as far as the account left by Megasthenes, the Greek diplomate who journeyed to the subcontinent in the 3rd century BC.

What is equally undeniable is that whether or not the authority of the brahmins was accepted, everyone internalized and jockeyed for position within the caste hierarchy that the brahmins presided over and legitimized. As Thapar confirms, the influence of the system was so pervasive that it was even internalized by adherents of religions that ostensibly rejected caste.

> All religions – indigenous or immigrant – internalized caste. Those who converted to religions promising social equality ended up carrying the baggage of caste with them. An entire village might convert, as for example in recent years when Dalits converted to the neo-Buddhism advocated by Ambedkar, (nevertheless caste hierarchies continued to be observed)… Or take the case of Islam where Muslim society was also fragmented. Muslims claiming ancestry from west Asia are of a higher caste than local converts. Despite both being Muslims there is still a distinction in caste. The ranking of caste according to occupation is also observed as it is in all religions in India … At the lowest level were the Dalit Muslims, like their Hindu counterparts continued to be treated as polluting and were often denied burial in the graveyards of high-caste Muslims … Every religion in India has its Dalits and OBCs (Other Backward Castes).[6]

Furthermore, while Thapar never tires of provoking her opponents by pointing out that the terms Hindu and Hinduism are, by subcontinental standards, relatively modern terms, at other times she nevertheless must admit that they are based on the older term "Sindhu," which is "the Indo-Aryan/Vedic Sanskrit name for the Indus river."[7] In other words Hindu is a corruption of Sindhu, meaning people of the Indus and beyond, which is a term of such antiquity that its origins are lost in the mists of time.

In reality, the connection means that while "the known history of the Hindu religion can be traced back to Vedic Brahminism from the late second millennium BC and winds its way through a variety of sects, belief systems, and ritual practices to the present," the etymology of "Hinduism" means that it's not unreasonable to trace it all the way back to having first connoted the people of the earliest known civilizations of the subcontinent, such as were located at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, collectively referred to as Indus valley civilizations.

The only fig leaf behind which Thapar can hide in order to avoid admitting what appears to be an eminently reasonable case for connecting Hindus, Sindhus, and the people of the Indus valley civilization is the disqualification of reason itself as an autonomous means of interrogating the past. Instead, her empiricism demands the discovery of an archaeological missing link, some form of Rosetta stone that may never be forthcoming, or else clear cut enough to meet with the approval of pro-secularist academics.

> Some scholars of the history of Hinduism would trace it back to the Indus Civilization but little is known for sure about this. Suggestions have been made some of which link it to the later religion and some do not. Once the pictograms are deciphered, then there might be more knowledge about the religion of this civilization and whether it forms a prior history of the later religion.[8]

But perhaps what most undermines Thapar's war on the historical continuity of the subcontinent and the

"sweeping generalizations" upon which the Hindu nationalist narrative is based is the fact that she herself routinely puts the campaign on hold whenever it suits her, which generally means whenever it interferes with her ability to attack her political opponents. For example, in the article *They Peddle Myths and Call it History*, authored by Thapar for the *New York Times*, she writes:

> The (Hindu) claim to victimization is ironic given that the worst form of victimization – declaring the lower castes to be so polluted as to be untouchable – was practiced by upper-caste Hindus for 2,000 years, including through the period when they were supposedly being victimized.[9]

As such, try as the secularists may, ultimately it's easy to understand why at some level or other nobody really buys their war on the historical continuity of Hinduism. Particularly since the secularists themselves can't help tripping over their own deconstructionism every time they switch from claiming there isn't enough continuity to support the Hindu nationalist narrative to denouncing the Hindu record of caste-based oppression.

BACK ON THE TRAIL OF THE HINDU GOLDEN AGE

Thus, with the secularist historians doing such a good job of undermining their own arguments, the possibility remained that there might be some truth to the Hindu nationalist narrative, including the claim that a Hindu Golden Age had once existed. After all, Megasthenes himself had claimed that slavery did not exist in India. But what did Megasthenes mean by slavery? There are many forms of slavery, and it's possible Megasthenes had some crude form of chattel slavery in mind, such as the Helotry that existed in more barbaric regions of the Peloponnese. On this point this author is in agreement with Thapar when she writes, "It is possible that Megasthenes, having the Greek conception of slavery in mind, did not recognise the Indian system, which was different from that of the Greeks."[10]

Added to which, it couldn't have been any harder back then than it is now for a ruler to hide from the ambassador of a foreign land that which he did not wish him to see.

As such, when I did finally begin to take the claim seriously that a fabled Hindu Golden Age had once



existed, it was not due to Megasthenes account, but rather when I first encountered the condemnations of usury by the earliest known Hindu lawgivers.

This is because the term "usury" is part of the lexicon of moral pronouncements on economic practices, unlike terms like "compound interest" or "loan," which convey no additional meaning beyond the mechanical description of the financial practice in question.

Thus, the use of the term usury by India's ancient Hindu lawgivers confirms that despite the fact that a money economy had existed in the subcontinent since as early as the fifth century B.C., in which loans were given both in cash and in kind,[11] the ancient Hindu lawgivers, unlike their 21st century counterparts, hadn't forgotten that economics is a school of moral philosophy.

However, to what extent they understood the arguments against allowing the charging of compound interest is unclear. For example, it's difficult to discern whether India's ancient lawgivers understood that the normalization of usury inexorably leads to such a concentration of wealth in the hands of the usurers that their power and influence inevitably become so great that even the ruling class became subordinated to their will. While the culture itself, including its normative morality and the philosophy that underpins it, becomes equally subordinated to the task of rationalizing usury in order to maintain the unjust status quo.



Neither is it clear whether they understood that the claim that charging compound interest is fair recompense for risk incurred by the money lender is baseless, given that like a gambling operation, the cost of risk is factored into the interest rate. In addition to which the lender expects his returns regardless of the fortunes of the debtor. Unlike, for example, equity finance, which can be considered a legitimate economic practice because it does involve shared risk. The investor gains if the venture does well. Conversely, if it fails, he can lose out. While the very existence of the equity finance model refutes the assumption that without lending money at interest there would be no means of raising capital.

In fact, the usurer can positively gain when a debtor fails to repay their debts, given the power and influence that comes with the concentration of wealth in the hands of the usurers inevitably allows them to bring about regulations that favor them in such scenarios, such as by allowing them to take ownership of the debtor's assets. While the same laws that ensure the usurers are made whole or even profit when the debtor defaults also ensure that the employees of the defaulter have no prospect of recouping what is owed to them after having been made redundant. Instead, the usurers are always first in line with free rein to plunder whatever assets remain.

The predatory nature of usury becomes even more apparent when the usurer is free to play a double game by backing the competitors of a debtor, thereby accelerating the demise of the debtor and the acquisition of his assets and setting the stage for segment by segment control of the economy.

Which is another reason why the claim that there is such a thing as the usury cycle is not a figment of the imagination, but a category of reality, one that begins with the normalization of usury, and ends with the economic and political hegemony of usurers, and the concomitant degeneration of the moral and philosophical fabric of the culture in order to rationalize the unjust status quo.

The extent to which all of this was understood by India's ancient lawgivers remains unclear. What is clear from their condemnations is that they understood charging compound interest is a form of usury and one that can be used as an instrument to enslave individuals and whole societies as surely as by using the sword.

Furthermore, not only are the references to usury in the subcontinent some of the oldest in historical record, but also the most vehement in their condemnation of it.

For example, while Aristotle likened usurers to those who ply sordid trades such as pimps, his contemporary in the subcontinent, Vasistha, likens usury to murder. In fact, he suggests usury is worse than murder because according to Vasistha, when a usurer and the murderer of a holy man are weighed on the scales of justice, the murderer of the holy man rises to the top while "the usurer trembles." Similarly, the 5th century lawgiver, Baudhayana, compares usury with the murder of the unborn child and concludes that usury is worse!

Thus, given the understanding of the relationship between economics and morality and the vehement condemnation of usury, it is easy to understand why some might take them for clues that the idyllic Hindu Golden Age may well once have existed.

But look closer and what becomes apparent is that there is an insincerity about the condemnations. It turns out their excessive nature serves to cover over the fact that neither lawgiver was prepared to put their pronouncements into practice – it was a case of

"the lawgiver doth protest too much," as Shakespeare might have put it.

Vasistha was only prepared to prohibit Brahmins from lending money at interest while permitting the *vaisya* (merchants) to do so within stipulated rates. Baudhayana permitted both *vaisya* and *kshatriya* (warriors) to do the same, provided the debtor was a degenerate of some kind, such as an extremely wicked man, an atheist or a homosexual.

As is typical of partial prohibitions, the exceptions were the thin end of the wedge that opened the floodgates to the wide-scale normalization of usury. It is no surprise then that by the 9th A.D. the commentator, Medhatithi, was arguing that because the god Vasistha, who possessed knowledge of all the three ages and was therefore immune to greed, accepted interest at the rate of 1/80th of the principle, it followed that Brahmins were also justified in doing the same.

By the 12th century, Brahmins no longer needed to rely on such cynical justifications thanks to the explicit permission the authors of the *Garuda Puran* gave Brahmins to engage in money-lending on the basis that, unlike agriculture, which is hampered by want of rains, royal terror, and the predations of mice, etc, interest keeps on growing at all times and under all circumstances.[12]

THE USURERS' PARADISE

Thus, when the French gem merchant and traveller, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, visited India in the 17th century, he discovered that the money-lenders of the subcontinent had been practising usury for almost three millennia, in comparison to Europe where the Jews had been practising usury for a mere five centuries. It is no surprise then that he had the following to say when commenting on the Banyia, one of the prominent castes specializing in usury:

> All the Jews that deal in Money and Exchange in the Empire of the Grand Seignior, are accounted a most subtle sort of people. But in the Indies they would be scarce thought fit to be apprentices to the bankers ... For in trade these banians are a thousand times worse than the Jews; more expert in all forms of cunning and tricks, and more malicious and mischievous in their revenge.[13]

It was a typical reaction of a European who had just discovered that after three millennia of continuous and religious sanction of usury, the subcontinent had become a usurers' paradise. This meant the economy had become a collection of predatory practices directed at ensuring that the principle target of the usurers, namely the peasants, remained for generation after generation caught in a never-ending cycle of debt. While the power of the usurers ensured they could rely on the support both of the temporal and spiritual authorities.

For example, despite the peasants typically being so impoverished that they lived hand-to-mouth, land taxes would be demanded before harvest time, forcing them to turn to village money lenders for the money; not that the peasant saw any of the money, because it was paid directly to the tax collectors.

In other regions, such as the western Deccan, land-owning money lenders gave out their lands to indebted sharecroppers in return for a large portion of the crops.

Another variation was the *manoti* (surety) system, in which state-recognized usurers made a formal agreement with the state to pay his client's taxes as they fell due.... The state considered the manotidar to have the first right on the harvest of the peasants, and he could be given assistance to collect the crops.[14] In many cases temples were branch offices for usurious operations run by the Brahmins,who liked to call the goods they received in return for their loans "a gift to God."

Meanwhile in the coastal region of Maharashtra, usurers known as *khots* demanded free labour and further services from indebted peasants, such as carrying the *khots* in palanquins.[15] In all cases, because the usurers took as much pride in shamelessly swindling their clients as they did in being scrupulously honest in dealings with fellow usurers, compound interest was only one of the instruments used to appropriate the fruits of peasant labour. For example, peasants could expect the crops they were forced to allow usurers to sell on their behalf to be routinely undervalued.

The use of short measures would ensure the losses incurred by the peasants would be even greater. In contrast the grain handed out to them in times of need was as over-valued as it was poor in quality; at times it was "so rotten, according to one official, that even cattle would not eat it."[16] Because they were powerless, peasants routinely had to hand over between one and a quarter to twice the weight of grain that had been advanced to them. Also "purse-loosening fees" were deducted from the loan amount or added to the

principle for the "privilege" of taking out such usurious loans.

They would also have to agree to supply valuable cash crops in return for poor quality grain that had been supplied to them "and even then at one and a half to one and three quarters the weight of the amount borrowed. This often led to a situation in which the crops of whole villages were in effect mortgaged in advance to sahukars."[17] Yet, because peasants often had to agree to loan agreements that stipulated the return of more cash crops than they could possibly grow, they ended the season even deeper in debt.[18]

As was often the case, impoverished peasants had little choice but to also turn to the sahukars for seeds, for which the sahukars demanded an even higher rate of return. In south Guratat, *'bi bamnu ane khavti dodhi'* was a common saying, meaning that peasants had to return half as much again for subsistence loans but double the amount for seed loans.[19]

By loaning seeds, the usurers were also able to control what the peasants grew. The usurers, knowing that they would appropriate much of the crop, used this control to ensure peasants grew a large proportion of cash crops while subsistence crops were grown in such small quantities that they remained in short supply. This forced peasants to rely on the usurers for hand-outs which ensured the prices of those hand-outs were kept artificially high.[20]

Even the off-season produce, such as milk, wool from sheep, and produce gathered from the forest, did not escape the attention of the usurers, who demanded it to off-set debts, ensuring the income from sidelines was also lost to peasants.[21]

What little that was left to them was the lowest quality produce, accounting for the proverb *Marwar Kuro, karsa khai gahon jime Baniya*, meaning the coarse grain is eaten by the cultivator, while the Baniya enjoys the wheat.[22]

In addition, it was not unusual for peasants to be left with less than a month's supply of foodstuff, ensuring they were dependent on the usurer for the rest of the year. The Baniya would tell them, "What need you care? When yours is done you have as much as you like from my shop."[23]

Given such a predatory mentality, it should come as no surprise that usurers also took full advantage of the illiteracy of the peasants. The practice of falsifying accounting records was commonplace, with usurers often keeping two sets of books – one for public consumption, and a private account book in which every debt, no matter how small or old was recorded. Fraudulent practices were compounded by the fact that usurers often refused to give receipts. Instead, illiterate peasants had no means of knowing if the details in documents they were forced to ratify with their thumb prints were correct. "Often, in fact, the page on which they put their impression was blank – being filled in at the usurer's leisure – which gave added scope for cheating."[24]

Gopashtami Festival



Another common fraudulent practice was undervaluing repayments, if not failing to record them at all. "Old woman, is your memory right? or the merchant's book right?" Said the usurer to the widow when demanding payment for a debt already long since paid, in a story written by the poet Jhaverchand Meghani. "The merchant's book is right!" replied the old woman fearfully. All the while, "the usurer kept his gleaming red account book under his arm," red signifying the blood of the peasant being sucked dry by the usurer.[25]

Numerous accounts confirm that the Meghani story is far from a little flight of fancy, for example, in 1875 the peasants of Ahmadnagar district testified that:

> The produce of the fields is also taken by the sowkars, who at the time of removing it assure us that it will be credited to our accounts, but they do not actually make any mention of it in the accounts. They also refuse to pass us any receipts for the produce removed by them.[26]

But why didn't the peasants just sell their own produce at market without going through the usurer? The settlement officer for Mandvi Taluka had this question on his mind when he asked "the Patel of moticher why

he did not take the produce of the field to the best market and dispose of it himself, instead of selling it to the Banian at rates, as he confessed, fixed by the Banian himself. His simple reply was that, if he did, the Banian would stop his credit and press him for the money that is owing."[27]

But even when peasants could sell their crops as they saw fit there was no escape from the exploitation of the usurers. This is because the village usurers were really fronts for wealthier usurers who were based in towns where their hegemony ensured the markets were no less hostile than the local usurers. This meant that the exorbitant road tolls peasants had to pay was only a taste of what was to come when they reached the marketplace, where they discovered that the town dealers had often agreed amongst themselves to refuse to pay more than a particular price for each product. Furthermore, they were required by convention to negotiate through dalals, commissioned agents who were supposed to represent their interests in return for a fee. In practice, however, they worked in collusion with the merchants to milk the peasants.[28]

Accounts from Rajasthan confirm that peasants were also charged at every turn for the privilege of selling crops themselves. Besides the road tolls on the way to market and fees to the agents,

> …there were various market levies, such as the general charge on all goods sold there, the kayali, or weighing tax taken by appointed weighers, and the singoti, levied on each head of animal sold. Peasants were moreover generally offered a lower price for produce than merchants selling the same market.[29]

A report from the Kheda district confirms that by such means the peasants had to part with about 18 percent of the value of the crop. False weights resulted in the loss of a further 10 percent.

But even after the sale had been agreed, yet more scams would ensure the peasant's losses would continue to mount. Merchants would wait until the peasant had begun to unload his carts before claiming that the produce was of lower quality than had been expected. The dalal invariably took the side of the merchants. "It was hard for the peasant to reload the cart and take the produce back – with the merchant and dalal in collusion, he had little choice but to accept the lower price."[30]

In addition to which, it was not uncommon for the peasant to have to accept 10 percent less than the final sale value for the privilege of being paid upon delivery. If the peasant insisted on the full amount due he would have to wait for a month or two before being paid at the merchant's leisure.

The predations continued when the peasants turned to the market stalls to procure items that were not available in the village, such as brassware, cloth, shoes, etc. The merchants would collude to ensure prices of the produce peasants offered in exchange were kept depressed while sale prices were kept excessively high. It was calculated that in Barado state by such means, including the use of short measures, the sellers got away with exchanging goods that were worth a quarter to a seventh of the value of the produce they received in exchange.[31] Contributing to such profit margins was the fact that the artisans who were producing the items on sale in the markets were typical as indebted and exploited as the rural peasants – often being reduced to surviving on handouts of materials and poor foodstuffs in return for handing over all they produced.

THE HEGEMONY OF THE USURERS - IMPACT ON THE CULTURE

Like a swarm of bloated ticks clinging to a dog, every vein and artery of the subcontinental economy was so infested with usurers that a dedicated and far more expansive work is required to have any hope of covering all of their predatory practices. Meanwhile, the fact that "caveat emptor" became the only principle in the Indian marketplace is just one example of the corrupting influence of that hegemony. Unfortunately, such was the hegemony of the usurers over such a long period of time that the warping effect on the culture went far beyond the marketplace.

For example, the peasants had so internalized the commands of their oppressors that in large part peasant honor was the measure of their ability to pay their debts. "While a public demonstration of its lack – such as the confiscation of property by court bailiffs in payment of a debt – was particularly shaming."[32]

As one British official noted, even when it would have been advantageous for a peasant to declare bankruptcy, hardly any did so for fear of being branded a "*nadar*" or defaulter. Instead, the peasant "implored with tears that he may be spared the indignity."[33]

A more telling example of the warping of the culture was how the vulnerability of the peasant com-

bined with the need for the banyia to justify his role and see himself in a good light gave rise to the phenomenon of the paternal money-lender. Hence, Balali Salaji, a Maratha peasant who owed money to the Banyia, Mulchand Khemchand, explained to the Deccan riots commission, "I had to trust to the *sowkar* [money-lender]. (I say to him) You are my mother, and I am your son, say truly what the amount [owed] is."[34]

The appeal to the usurers to act towards his client as a mother acts towards his son is of course a defensive tactic. As was the complimentary assertion by peasants encapsulated by the proverb *Dam dugna, dhan tigna*, the gist of which is those who have should sustain those who have not.[35]

These were by and large futile attempts to appeal to the better nature of the moneylenders, given their attitude, as one British official remarked, was apt to be "The poor are always with us...Thank God...Let us exploit them."[36] Thus, aside from gestures such as a bolt of cloth gifted on a special occasion, the paternal reciprocation of the moneylender usually took the form of more loans, or restructuring of loans, or perhaps food in the event that debt had so impoverished the peasant and his family that there was a real danger they would default by virtue of starving to death. Meanwhile, Eugene Genovese brings out the more vicious side of the relationship when he writes:

> Inherent in this doctrine [of paternalism] were dangerously deceptive ideas of "gratitude," "loyalty," and "family." Inherent also was an intimacy that turned every act of impudence and insubordination – every act of unsanctioned self-assertion – into an act of treason and disloyalty, for by repudiating the principle of submission it struck at the heart of the master's moral self-justification and therefore esteem.[37]

Thus, the paternal moneylender could "turn nasty if he felt betrayed by his peasant client":

> even a mere hint of distrust and loyalty on the part of the peasant was enough to provoke an angry response... This was most obviously the case if the client asked for a loan from a different sahukar. The hurt and offended Banyia, his patronage spurned, would probably demand that the long-standing debt be repaid in full. If this failed to break the client's 'insubordination', the demand was likely to be pursued with malevolence, ceasing only when the peasant family was ruined.[38]

Meanwhile, in the realm of the arts, by the 16th century even poets were describing love in usurious terms.

> Be as usurious as a Banjara in your extraction of love from me, but O my love! Don't break your custom with me![39]

As David Hardiman notes in his study, *Feeding the Banyia*, "the sheer frequency of such usage reveals with great power the centrality of the usurer-debtor relationship in medieval society."[40]

So much so that the debt-condition had in fact even become the model for man's relationship with the almighty, as confirmed by numerous devotional verses:

> My Lord is like a merchant,
> Easily He goes on trading:
> Without balance and scales,
> He weighs the whole world[41]

The pre-eminence of the doctrine of Karma which frames God as a supernatural bookkeeper is yet another example of the hegemony of Banyia morality. Good actions enhanced a person's credit, bad actions augmented a debt. Karma never failed to pay in exact proportion to the quality of the action.[42]

This was a doctrine that had originally been extended to the peasantry by the disciplines of the Buddha in 500 BC, which should come as no surprise since "Buddhism was based firmly amongst the mercantile classes."[43] But it was under the hegemony of the Banyia that the doctrine became "integrated strongly into the popular consciousness of India."[44]

The same is true of the idea that what defined man's spiritual starting position was a state of indebtedness to a celestial moneylender, accounting for the reason the 15th century mystic Kabir writes:

> The capital the money-lender supplies
> Is not to be squandered in vain,
> Or else you'll be in serious trouble
> When the time for accounting comes!
> When the scribe draws up your account,
> There'll be no end to your dues[45]

While karma advanced the idea of debt being the spiritual starting position of man, the complimentary idea of ancestral debt would ensure the son would become responsible for his father's debts. As Judge Harrison, a Judge of Ahmadnagar district, writing in 1850 noted:

> according to Hindu law, a son is under the most sacred obligation bound to pay the debts of the father, until he does so, the soul of his parent is supposed either to be

> detained in purgatory or by transmigration to enter the body of a donkey, camel, bullock or other beast of burden, which is further supposed to fall into the hands of the father's creditor to undergo severe treatment, until released by the payment of the debt by the son.[46]

In his history of Dharmashastra, quoting the Narada Smriti, P.V. Kane provides an equally if not more dire variation of the consequences that can befall the soul of debtor.

> If a man fails to pay on demand a debt or promised gift, that sum (by the addition of interest) goes on growing till it amounts to a hundred crores (crore = 10,000,000) and when a hundred crores are reached he is born again and again in the house of his creditor as a slave in order to repay the debt (by his labour).[47]

It should come as no surprise that the hegemony of Banyia morality also played a role in ensuring that India's most notorious social system perdured, namely the caste system. As R.S. Sharma confirms in his study *Usury in Early Mediaeval India,* the earliest Hindu lawgivers, including "Gautama, Baudhayana, Apastamba and Kautilya, do not introduce any considerations of *varna* (caste) in the payment of interest."[48] But all that changes as the economy increasingly comes under the sway of the usurers, at which point Vashista and the lawgivers of the early centuries of the Christian era begin to introduce such considerations. Predictably, the lower a person is on the social pecking order, the higher the rate of interest he is expected to pay. Thus, Brahmanas are required to pay 24% per year, Ksatriyas 36%, vaisyas 48% and sudras 60%.[49]

"For in trade these banians are a thousand times worse than the Jews; more expert in all forms of cunning and tricks, and more malicious and mischievous in their revenge."

Sharma confirms that two millennia later sudras in villages continued to be charged higher rates of interest.[50] Usury provided a powerful economic incentive to maintain caste given the institution had become one more instrument for keeping the majority hopelessly in debt while allowing the privileged few to live high on the hog off their backs. The hegemony of Banyia morality, and particularly concepts such as ancestral debt and the generation after generation of indebtedness that it led to helped harden caste over the millennia into the endogamous system that it became.

But perhaps the most subtle strategy for maintaining the unjust status quo was simply the promotion of polytheism itself. At the crudest level this meant defending the right of people within the subcontinent to remain in a primitive state, thereby ensuring they remained easy to exploit. In addition, this policy redirected moral focus away from the unjust economic system by promoting the idea that what made a person moral was a function of his diet, or his reverence for animals, most notably the cow. This clearly also served the interest of the usurers. In addition to which, under the pretext of defending religious freedom, cultivating a society in which a plethora of sects and a polytheistic landscape existed ensured that no one religion could mount a challenge to the hegemony of Banyia morality.

One of the most subtle advantages of promoting polytheism, however, was that the philosophical underpinning of society remained conducive to maintaining the unjust economic status quo thanks to the relationship between polytheism and subjective truth. After all, why should truth that flows from one of any number of different understandings of the universe be treated as anything other than subjective? In other words, polytheism is the theological expression of the philosophical position that truth is subjective. And if truth is subjective, even truth deemed objective by virtue of having been arrived at by reason and adhering to the principle of non-contradiction becomes one more opinion.

In such a society, who is to say what is right and wrong? Like Plato, the subcontinent's usurers were subtle enough to understand that the answer to the question is that when truth becomes opinion, it becomes the opinion of the powerful, which in turn meant that justice became what the usurers said it was.

In contrast, a philosophical construct such as the Greek idea of *logos* leads to objective truth given it is based, as Prussian philosopher G. W. F. Hegel explains, on the assertion that "reason governs the world. The

movement of the solar system takes place according to unchanging laws. These laws are reason, implicit in the phenomena in question." For the same reason one can understand why Hegel was moved to say of the concept of Logos, which was subsumed into Catholicism, "history teaches that ideas of this kind, which may seem trivial to us, have not always been in the world; that, on the contrary, such a thought makes an epoch in the annals of human intelligence." Aristotle said of Anaxagoras, the originator of the concept of Logos, that he appeared as a sober man among drunkards.

However, Hegel was wrong to conclude that no such idea could be found in the philosophical record of the subcontinent. Originally, it seemed that Hegel had a case after my first attempt to refute him hit a dead-end. *Loka* is a Sanskrit term meaning "world" or "a particular division of the universe." The most frequent division of the universe in Hinduism is the *tri-loka*: Earth, heaven, and atmosphere. Could there be a connection between Logos and Lokra? The reply that came back from Professor Michael Witzel was unequivocal. His actual words were:

> Greek logos cannot be related to SKt. (Sanskrit) loka: A Greek -g- would correspond to a SKt. -g-, and SKt. -k- to a Greek -k-. (also -o- in loka would be Greek -eu- , and Greek -o- would be Skt. -a-) In any case SKt. loka belongs to the Indo-Eur. root luk/leuk (SKt. ruc) 'to shine' etc, thus "open space" (Latin lucus, Dutch loo, Lithuanian laukas, etc.)

Since Professor Witzel is the Wales professor of Sanskrit at Harvard University and regarded as one of the world's foremost authorities on Sanskrit, I had to accept my quest to find a root word for Logos in Sanskrit had ended in failure. But as time passed, I realized the issue was that I had been looking at the wrong word, and Hegel had been theorizing at far too early a phase in terms of the European understanding of the subcontinent's past. Had Hegel been alive in 1894 when Hermann Oldenberg's, *Religion of the Vedas* was published, he would have been intrigued to read that, "*Rta* [rha-tha] is the moral law governing the actions of men. It is the law—to use the expressions emphasised by the Vedic diction—which imposes truth and going on the straight path. *Rta* is the concept of the physical and moral world order."[51]

Rta, like so many Sanskrit words, had been understood to be a word with many different meanings associated with it. This is explained by its changing meaning over the vast stretch of time that is the canvas of Indian history. Today it's a Sanskrit word commonly understood as meaning simply, "Truth." But there is another explanation for why there are collections of English words associated with some Sanskrit words. "English is not a philosophical language." Catholic historian and author E. Michael Jones explained, "In the Liddell-Scott's Greek English dictionary there are five pages of English words trying to provide some sort of explanation for the one Greek word, Logos." Oldenberg had realized the same applied to the Sanskrit word *Rta*, a word which at once seemed to mean universal order, truth, cosmic order, the divine law, fixed or settled order, and many related ideas.

Rta is in fact a word for describing one big philosophical idea beyond the grasp of any one English word, in this case it stood for a philosophical concept similar to the *logos* of the Greeks, the Logos that had transformed the cultural settings of European society and brought about an advanced civilization in what had once been, as Joseph Conrad wrote in *Heart of Darkness*, "one of the dark places on earth."

Oldenberg continues, "Even in the Indo-Iranian period, the thought about a dominant world order, about the determination by a higher force of what must and should take place, had been connected by choices (or *dharma*) to the idea of the *Rta*."[52]

Finally, one century after Oldenberg's encounter with *Rta*, distinguished anthropologist Roy A. Rappaport made the connection between the two philosophical concepts of *Rta* and Logos in his opus *Ritual and Religion.*

> We have noted strong resemblances among certain ancient notions, the Logos of pre-classical Greece, Ma'at of Dynastic Egypt, Asha of pre-Islamic Iran, Rta of Vedic India and earlier, Nelli of ancient Mexico. All are terms for cosmic order, four of them are themselves understood as truth as well as order, the fifth, Logos, claims truth as one of its inseparable attributes. Harmony, unity, and eternity are also aspects of them all. In Greece, Iran, Egypt, and possibly Mexico the concept seems to have been at one time or another apotheosized, but in all of these societies it is also, and primarily, a principle to which even divinities are subject, a principle standing in opposition to chaos and falsehood. In three of the instances, the notions of chaos, disorder, lie, falsehood, wrong, are covered by single terms. Logos, Ma'at, Asha, Rta, and possibly Nelli, all require for their completion and preservation the participation of "following" of humans who are free to follow

> druj, arta, isfet, doxa, idia phronesis…. If the attribution of an Indo-Iranian date to Asha/Rta is correct, it may be that it antedates the emergence of the state and the development of literacy in Iran and India. It is nevertheless the case that the instances I have adduced are all of archaic civilizations, societies organized as states and possessed of literacy. Moreover, with the exception of Nelli, they all flourished in more or less contiguous regions through concurrent or contiguous epochs. But similar notions may be found in regions remote from the Eastern Mediterranean and Ancient Near East among peoples who possessed neither writing nor the trappings of state. [53]

As for the importance of *Rta* in the Vedic scheme, the term appears as many as 390 times in the *Rigveda*. Sanskrit scholar Maurice Bloomfield referred to *Rta* as "one of the most important religious conceptions of the Rigveda," noting that, "from the point of view of the history of religious ideas we may, in fact we must, begin the history of Hindu religion at least with the history of this concept in the Rigveda."[54] While Ramakrishna, Guru of the Hindu Nationalist icon Vivekananda, characterized *Rta* as nothing less than "the one concept which pervades the whole of Rigvedic thought."

But while *Rta* might have been the one concept which pervades the whole of Rigvedic thought and the starting point for the History of the Hindu religion, it could not remain a central idea. Instead the imperatives of the usurers led to a philosophical extinction event during which the *Rta* fell by the wayside.

The same is true of Vishvakarman, described in the Rigveda as the Creator of the Universe, and a deity whose presence in the record not only implies a step towards monotheism, but whose nature is also associated with reason, given he is described as the "Lord of Speech."[55]

But thanks to the hegemony of the usurers the Creator of the Universe would eventually disappear behind a storm of 330 million gods. With them came the philosophical supremacy of subjective truth, ensuring justice would become the opinion of the powerful, which is to say the usurers. And instead philosophers who buttressed the unjust status quo would be promoted, like the 7th century thinker, Adi Shankara. As Kuldeep Kumar, writing for the *Hindu* in June 2016 explained in a piece written in reaction to the news that the BJP government of Narendra Modi was contemplating declaring Adi Shankara India's "national Philosopher."

> "An anecdote from the great philosopher's life is cited a little too often wherein he is taught by a Chandala, an untouchable outcaste in the entrenched hierarchy of the caste system, that all beings are in reality one and the same. However, Shankara fought shy of putting his non-dualism into practice because it would have brought about a social revolution and shaken the foundations of the caste system. To skirt the social issues and the need to establish equality in accordance with his philosophical stance of oneness of all beings, Shankara came up with a stratagem. He came up with the notion that reality was of two types – parmarthik satta (ultimate reality) and vyavharik satta (practical reality). So, in ultimate sense all beings were one without any difference but in practical sense, they were different. This provided the much needed philosophical rationale and justification for the caste system and the web of discriminatory social, cultural, and economic relations based on it.[56]

Ultimately, the cultivation of a theological landscape filled with millions of lesser deities instead of the Creator of the Universe ensured that in the collective consciousness God's power, and therefore ability to exact justice, would be equally fragmented. This perhaps provided the greatest advantage to the usurers given the outcome would be pessimism, fatalism, leading finally to the acceptance by the masses of their downtrodden, perpetually debt-enslaved existence.

As such, what began with the failure of the Hindu-lawgivers to come to grips with the problem of usury led over the millennia into India becoming a definitive example of how the normalization of usury inevitably leads to the economic and political hegemony of usurers and the concomitant degeneration of the moral and philosophical fabric of the culture.

For the same reason it is understandable that when the challenge to the hegemony of the usurers did finally come, it could only have originated from outside the subcontinent.

It was the Muslim warlords who began invading the subcontinent at the end of the first millennium who finally brought that challenge. The Koran was their holy book, and given they believed that it had been revealed to their prophet Mohamed by the Arch Angel Gabriel himself, and it was unequivocal in its condemnation of usury, one shudders to think of how they would react to the usurers' paradise that awaited them.

Endnotes Available by Request or Online at www.CultureWars.com

REVIEWS

WHY IS BEAUTY TRUTH?

Roger Scruton, *Beauty: A Very Short Introduction*
(Amazon Kindle) ISBN 978-0199559527

REVIEWED BY E. MICHAEL JONES

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

— John Keats
Ode on a Grecian Urn

I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.

— John 14:6

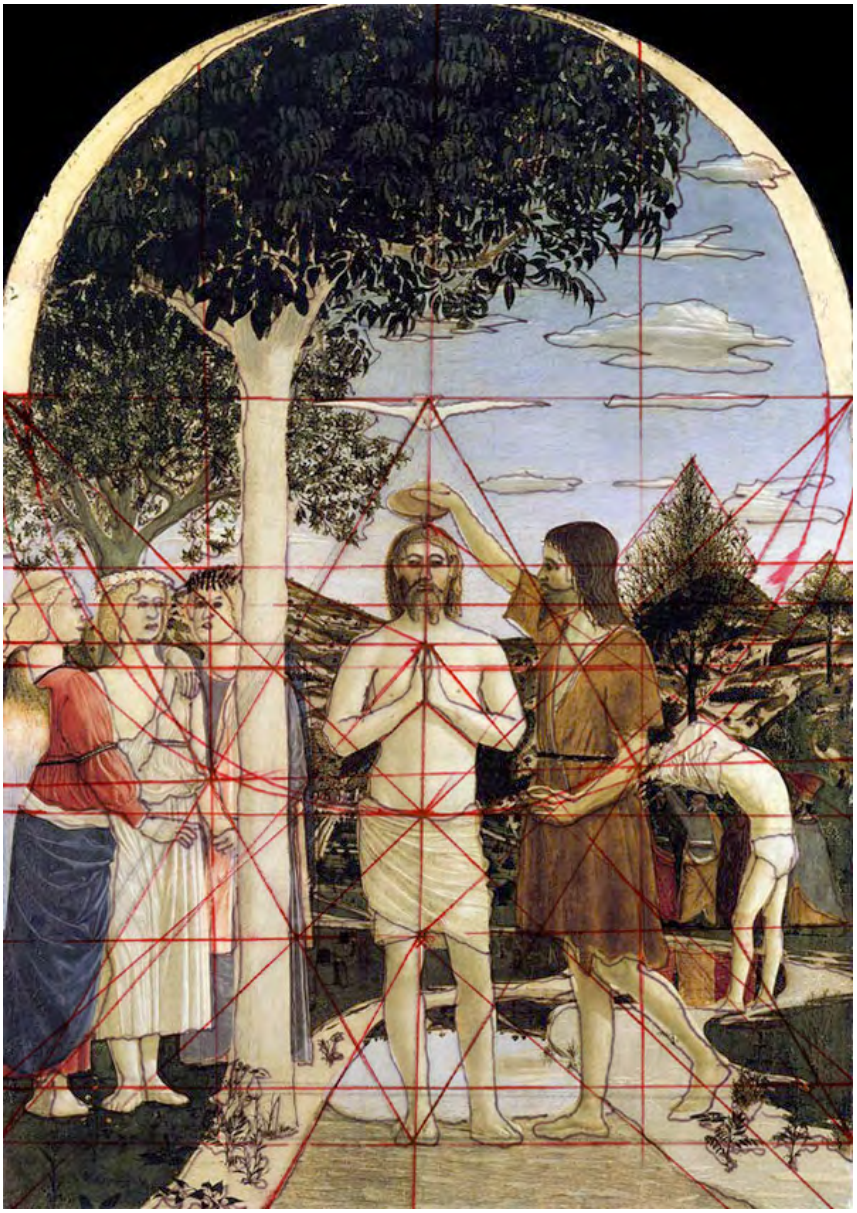
No one was more qualified to write a book on beauty than the late Sir Roger Scruton. He was a man of impeccable taste and cultivated manners who could charm an audience even when, after being invited to a symposium at Notre Dame to talk about beauty, he ended up talking about wine instead. He most probably could have come back in a year and talked about beer and charmed that audience just as much a second time, but death intervened.

He was especially qualified in the field of music, having not only the ability to play an instrument but the ability to compose musical pieces as well. *Das Rheingold* is a brilliant critique of the mythic origins of Capitalism in theft, but Scruton turns his review of it into an attack on the failed revolutionary socialism—Wagner took part in the revolution of 1848 with Bakunin—which motivated Wagner to take to the barricades in Dresden and write the opera in the first place. When Scruton turns Nibelheim into a "police state" which is "perhaps the first premonition in Western art of Orwell's 1984," instead of viewing it as the City of London and symbol of capitalism as state-sponsored usury, he misses the point in a way that defies explanation. His analysis of Richard Wagner's opera *Das Rheingold* is musically acute but philosophically and economically tone deaf because the same conservative world view which allowed Scruton to charm his audience at Notre Dame is based on an ethnocentrism which blinds him to the reality of what Wagner is saying here. Scruton can't seem to get over the fact that Wagner had the misfortune of being born a German, and that he needs to turn him into a proper English conservative by dragooning him into the anti-Communist crusade to make up for that birth defect.

What is true of his book on music is *a fortiori* true of his book on beauty. Scruton aspires to universality when he defines beauty as "a real and universal value, one anchored in our rational nature." Because of its firm foundation in *Being*, "the sense of beauty has an indispensable part to play in shaping the human world." Unfortunately, Scruton then loses his train of thought along the way of telling us what he means by those and other undefined terms. Scruton traces his understanding of beauty back to Plotinus, referring to beauty as a transcendental, a notion which still had not been universally recognized at the time of Aquinas, who dealt with it as an addendum to his thought on Being. According to Plato and Plotinus, "beauty is an ultimate value—something that we pursue for its own sake, and for the

The artist who imitates nature must capture its soul.

The Baptism of Christ, 1450, Piero della Francesca



pursuit of which no further reason need be given." Scruton then compares beauty to truth and goodness, making it "one member of a trio of ultimate values which justify our rational inclinations." Scholastics called those "ultimate values" transcendentals, which meant that they, along with "the One," described the fundamental and ultimate aspects of Being, or as Scruton put it "Why believe p? Because it is true. Why want x? Because it is good. Why look at y? Because it is beautiful."

Instead of accepting the ontological foundation of beauty as the platform upon which he erects his own aesthetics, Scruton begins to quibble with the Angelic Doctor, accusing Aquinas of making "theological claims" about beauty, when this is not the case. Scuton undermines his whole aesthetics by erecting a roadblock which divides its history between then and now when he says apodictically that the Angelic Doctor's "subtle and comprehensive reasoning" is "not a vision that we can assume." As a result, Scruton proposes "to set it to one side, considering the concept of beauty without making any theological claims."

Throughout Scruton's book we are subjected to the same self-defeating behavior. Scruton opens the door to what seems like a promising solution to "a deep difficulty in the philosophy of beauty" only to slam it shut again after we have been granted a tantalizing vision of our goal. In this regard, Scruton tells us that Aquinas's understanding of beauty is "worth noting" because he "regarded truth, goodness and unity as 'transcendentals'—features of reality possessed by all things, since they are aspects of Being, ways in which the supreme gift of Being is made manifest to the understanding." Beauty is a manifestation of Being, and this fact provides the best response to those who claim "that beauty is a matter of appearance, not of being." Then after affirming that beauty makes a reasonable claim about its object, Scruton takes it all back again by claiming that these "reasons do not compel the judgement, and can be rejected without contradiction," forcing him to wonder "So are they reasons or aren't they?" Whenever Scruton is on the verge of drawing definite conclusions, he has to run the idea first by his ethnic superego, an imaginary figure made up of the ghosts of people like John Locke and David Hume, who have the final say on everything, "creating a soothing and harmonious context, a continuous narrative as in a street or a square, where nothing stands out in particular, and good manners prevail."

Sir Roger Scruton



Pace, Sir Roger, but there is nothing theological about Scholastic aesthetics. Aquinas's ontology has been influenced by Revelation, but the rudimentary aesthetic principles we can derive from that ontology do not determine his aesthetics, nor does it determine the aesthetic theories of those who paved the way for a deeper understanding of beauty.

Why then does Sir Roger feel that the Angelic Doctor's "subtle and comprehensive reasoning" is "not a vision that we can assume." In his autobiography *Gentle Regrets*, Scruton tells us that "there is consolation without truth, as we know from the history of religion." The real question is, however, whether Scruton believes that there can be beauty without truth.

SOLEMN RITUALS

Sir Roger Scruton was born into a troubled lower middle-class family and grew up "in a nondescript corner of post-war England," where "nothing could conceivably happen . . . except the things that happen anywhere: a bus passing, a dog barking, football on the wireless, shepherd's pie for tea." After discovering the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke, Scruton realized that art provided a way out of that dreary existence. Scruton associated art with the English upper class, who lived hidden behind a wall which he could see from the library that provided the Hermetic texts, which he "read like an alchemist, searching for the spell that would admit me to that secret world, where shadows fall on tonsured lawns, and the aesthetic (or was it ascetic?) way of life occurs in solemn rituals after tea."

After serving his apprenticeship as "a barbarian let loose in a library" (a phrase he appropriated from Ezra Pound, Scruton ended up at Cambridge University, where he had the misfortune to study philosophy as "bequeathed by Russell, Wittgenstein and Moore." Logical positivism convinced him that any philosophy with any connection to the Logos of human existence (or its rejection, as in the case of Nietzsche) was founded on "nothing more than megalomaniac fantasies, implausible analogies and false distinctions founded neither in logic nor in fact." Realizing that "the new philosophy I studied proved no more satisfactory to me than the science it had replaced," Scruton gravitated toward culture as a "more important way of seeing things," and that eventually led him to aesthetics.

But not before a long detour through the sexual revolution of the 1960s, during which he played keyboards for a band which emerged at the same time and in roughly the same place as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Suffering from the multiple personality disorder that resulted from simultaneous submergence in the high culture of T. S. Eliot and F.R. Leavis as well as the already-mentioned rock bands, Scruton adopted a bifurcated personality based on "Vernon," the sissy name his mother wanted to give him, and "Roger," the masculine name he adopted from his father:

> Although Vernon's evenings were devoted to string quartets, Roger's involved rock, R&B and sexual intercourse, which began in 1961, two years before the date allotted by Philip Larkin, though with an unhappiness of which he would surely have approved. Our school contingent arrived in Cambridge in the shape of a pop group, with Dave as lead guitar, myself on piano and Pete, the rhythm guitarist, relaying to us the interesting innovations of a group he knew in Liverpool.

Swept up in the revolutionary fervor of his age, Scruton found himself in Paris in May of 1968, where Jewish revolutionaries like Daniel

Cohn-Bendit bombarded the riot police with copies of Wilhelm Reich's *Mass Psychology of Fascism*. Scruton observed the revolutionary mayhem from his garret window, not sure he agreed with what was going on. Unlike the English poet William Wordsworth, who felt it was "bliss to be alive" during the French Revolution of 1789, Scruton felt a "surge of political anger" while watching its 1968 sequel from "the other other side of the barricades from all the people I knew." Demanding some justification from the '60s version of Annette Vallon, the woman who bore Wordsworth's revolutionary love child, Scruton had a copy of Michel Foucault's *Les mots et les choses* thrust into his face, as "the bible of the *soixante-huitards*." Foucault's book turned Scruton into a conservative, because it justified:

> every form of transgression, by showing that obedience is merely defeat. It is an artful book, composed with a satanic mendacity, selectively appropriating facts in order to show that culture and knowledge are nothing but the 'discourses' of power."

Foucault's ultimate act of transgression was his subversion of truth. Like William of Ockham and his mentor Satan, Foucault maintained "the old nominalist sleight of hand" that:

> "truth" requires inverted commas, that it changes from epoch to epoch, and is tied to the form of consciousness, the episteme, imposed by the class that profits from its propagation. The revolutionary spirit, which searches the world for things to hate, has found in Foucault a new literary formula.

Foucault died in 1984 after spreading AIDS, which he:

> contracted during well-funded tours as an intellectual celebrity. However, his books are on university reading lists all over Europe and America. His vision of European culture as the institutionalized form of oppressive power is taught everywhere as gospel, to students who have neither the culture nor the religion to resist it. Only in France is he widely regarded as a charlatan.

Scruton went on to become the conservative scourge of Foucauldians, but in doing that did he really challenge the claim that truth "changes from epoch to epoch, and is tied to the form of consciousness, the episteme, imposed by the class that profits from its propagation?" Or did he simply come up with a more ethnocentric version of the same idea in his aesthetics? By 1971, Scruton had become a conservative, largely because of the influence of English culture in general and English common law in particular, in which he found:

> proof that there is a real distinction between legitimate and illegitimate power, that power can exist without oppression, and that authority is a living force in human conduct. English law, I discovered, is the answer to Foucault. Inspired by my new studies I began to search for a conservative philosophy.

Unsurprisingly, Scruton found that conservative philosophy in the writings of Edmund Burke. Like Burke, Scruton's first work was in aesthetics. Burke's political thought was persuasive because Scruton had learned "as a teenager" that "aesthetic judgement" was "not merely a subjective opinion, unargued because unarguable, and of no significance to anyone besides oneself." Rather, "aesthetic judgement lays a claim upon the world, that it issues from a deep social imperative, and that it matters to us in just the way that other people matter to us, when we strive to live with them in a community." Burke allowed Scruton to make "the passage from aesthetics to conservative politics with no sense of intellectual incongruity, believing that, in each case, I was in search of a lost experience of home." Burke convinced Scruton "that societies are not and cannot be organized according to a plan or a goal, that there is no direction to history, and no such thing as moral or spiritual progress."

According to Plato and Plotinus, "beauty is an ultimate value - something that we pursue for its own sake, and for the pursuit of which no further reason need be given."

Scruton found Burke's defense of prejudice even more persuasive than his aesthetics. Scruton felt that prejudice was the antithesis of logos, and that "the real justification for a prejudice is the one that justifies it as a prejudice, rather than as a rational conclusion of an argument." Scruton goes on to claim that sexual relations are "guided by deep and immovable prejudice, in

which outrage, shame and honour are the ultimate grounds." Sexual revolutionaries "have no difficulty in showing that those motives are irrational" because they are, in fact, irrational. The result is "a faltering in the reproductive process" which were "shored up and fulfilled by the traditional prejudices," but are now "left exposed and unprotected by the skeletal structures of rationality." This is not exactly a ringing endorsement of the logos of human sexuality, and it shows why conservatism, far from opposing the Foucauldian attack on sexual morality, actually enables it by demonstrating its source in ethnic prejudice:

> This is an example of what happens when prejudice is wiped away in the name of reason, without regard for the real social function that prejudice alone can fulfil. Indeed, it was partly by reflecting on the disaster of sexual liberation, and the joyless world that it seems to have produced around us, that I came to see the truth of Burke's otherwise somewhat paradoxical idea.

If Benjamin Franklin was right when he said that experience keeps an expensive school but fools will learn in no other, Scruton arrived at this conclusion in the expensive school of experience, and once again a French woman was his guide. After graduating from Cambridge with a degree in philosophy, Scruton was appointed lecturer at the Collège Universitaire at Pau. Living "for a year on the Côteaux de Jurançon, the incomparably beautiful foothills of the Pyrenees" exposed him to Catholicism in situ, which precipitated an overpowering aesthetic experience that drew him to the religion that religious art was designed to portray:

> Within minutes I would lose all interest in the building and its aesthetic powers, and join the mumbling widows in their pew. And if – as sometimes happened – a priest entered from the sacristy, obedient to a calendar that mysteriously sanctified the hours, I would listen to the Latin words, and join in the Credo, whose plainsong opening phrase – "*Credo in unum Deum*" – is surely one of the most succinct affirmations of faith in music. I was not a believer, but not a mocker either. Standing, kneeling, sitting and singing in obedience to imperatives that for me were options, I was for a moment a believer in belief, a fellow-traveller of pilgrims who would soon pass out of view.

The ultimate aesthetic experience is known as the beatific vision, which occurs when the soul beholds God as He is.

Eventually, Scruton moved in with a woman who "had been brought up in the Catholic Church not far from Jurançon," and after "shadows had fallen across our life," he decided to marry her "less as a final decision than as a remedy for all our mistakes." In order to have that mistake blessed by the Church, Scruton took instruction in the truths of the Catholic faith, all of which Scruton readily accepted except one:

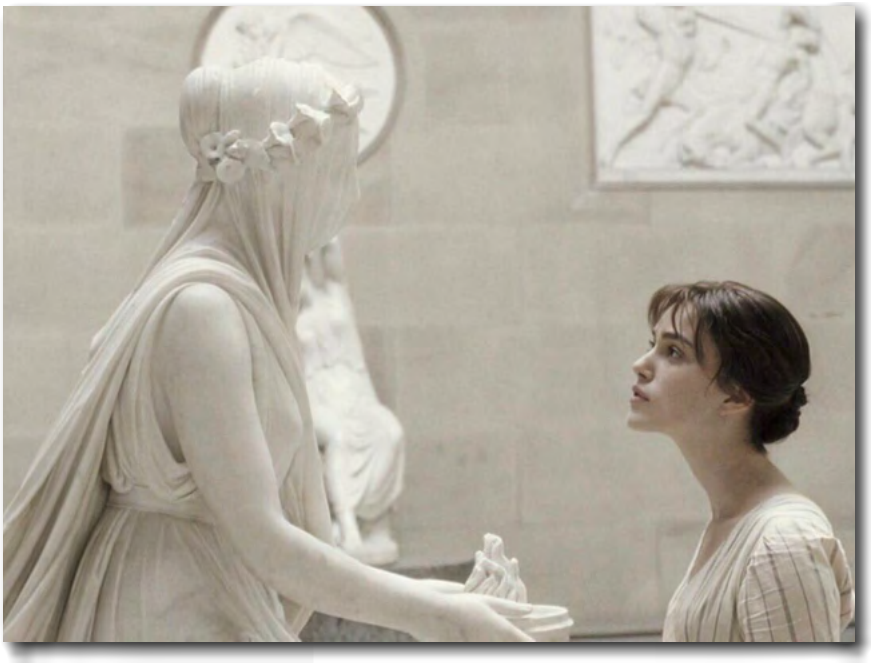
> "I assented to them all: not one of them created the slightest intellectual difficulty, save the major premise of God's existence. But this too could be held in place, I surmised, by the structure that had been built on it, and whose angles and junctures I knew from St Thomas Aquinas."

Scruton's problems were both moral—trouble being faithful to his vows—and, more importantly, metaphysical. As a true student of Wittgenstein and Russell, Scruton felt that the structure of the Catholic Church stood "unshakably, even though built upon nothing."

Bad metaphysics led to bad aesthetics, leading Scruton to believe that religion was nothing more than a "work of art," confected by men who obeyed the commands of a non-existent god. How is this any different than what Feuerbach and Foucault preached? Scruton's answer is that we should revere the Church for lying to us because "its values are aesthetic values: beauty, wholeness, symmetry, harmony." Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are transcendentals because of their intimate relationship with Being. Metaphysics is the science of Being. Deprived of its foundation in Being, aesthetics would wither away into pointless subjectivity of the sort which Scruton found repugnant but ultimately unrefutable.

Or are we putting the cart before the horse here? A more probable thesis is that Scruton found the historical foundation of the Church in Christ implausible because he could not follow its moral teaching:

Keira Knightley in Pride and Prejudice in a walk through Darcy's private collection



> My attitude to the Church whose rituals I was prepared to borrow was still not the attitude of a believer. I too was a thief, and the marriage that I stole one morning from the Oratory faced me thereafter with an immovable accusing stare. At last, I disposed of it, and was duly punished. My years of guilt were clear proof of the Church's view of matrimony as an eternal and indissoluble tie. Subsequent attempts to obtain an annulment were rightly rebuffed and for two penitential decades I wandered among *jeunes filles en fleurs*, spoiling their bouquets.

Scruton never got over his failed sacramental marriage and his inability to keep the vows he made. He knew that his divorce could not end his marriage, because "divorce does not end a real marriage, which will remain sacred even to those who have drifted away from it, or who have tried to set its vows aside." Unable to undo his violation of the vows he made had alienated Scruton from any firm foothold on Being. As a result, he ended up not returning to his wife, but solemnizing an arrangement with a new wife via a faux vow sworn in a faux church:

> many years following my divorce I was conscious of floating in a world of chimerical affections, swept along by a mutable tide, and knowing that I was desecrating what had once been consecrated to a higher purpose. I was constantly aware of that other person, whom I no longer saw, but whose thoughts, feelings and reproaches were addressed to me in my own inner voice. I embarked on a kind of penitential routine, in the attempt to heal the part of me that had been torn free from the marriage and which continually bled. And when, to my surprise, I began to live and feel like a whole person once again, it was because I wanted at last to make an unbreakable vow – not to confirm an arrangement that already existed, but in order to begin life again. This vow was solemnized, however, not by the Roman Catholic, but by the Anglican Church. I was welcomed home at last by my tribal religion – the religion of the English, who don't believe a word of it.

IT'S TRANSCENDENTAL

Over the course of the Middle Ages, as Aristotle began to supplant Plato in the Scholastic mind, beauty began to acquire the status of a transcendental, "semi-consciously at first," then more specifically in the writings of Robert Grosseteste, who "attributed the name of Beauty (*Pulchritudo*) to God, and wrote, 'If everything desires the good and the beautiful together, the good and the beautiful are the same,'" but while the same in terms of the order of Being, they appear as different to us according to the order of knowing. "For beauty," according to Grosseteste, "is a disposition of the good in so far as it pleases the apprehension, whereas the good strictly speaking has to do with the disposition in which it pleases our affections."

St. Bonaventure had already made "daring" aesthetic claims in an "almost unnoticed opusculum" which appeared around the same time, when he came up with an aesthetic theory which saw transcendentals as varying manifestations of Being, according to which: "*unum* has to do with the efficient cause, *verum* with the formal cause, and *bonum* with the final cause; but *pulchrum* 'encompasses every cause and is common to each . . . It has to do equally with every cause.' In short, Bonaventure defines beauty as 'the splendour of all the transcendentals together. . . ."

The ontological breakthrough that allowed a new approach to aesthetics came in a disputation between St. Thomas Aquinas and

The Cave of Altamira, Cantabria, Spain



St. Bonaventure over Being, not aesthetics. Confronted with St. Bonaventure's claim that "insofar as creatures are in potency in some respect, they must be material in some respect," Aquinas concluded that "immaterial substances are composed of [not of matter and form but] essence and existence." Aquinas affirms this distinction rather than drawing the absurd conclusion that angels, or separated substances were in some way composed of matter, or that there was potency in God, ideas which Aquinas traced to the Jewish thinker Avicebron.

Faced with the problem of describing how immaterial beings are in potency, Thomas is forced to conclude that their potency arises from the fact that "immaterial substances are composed of essence and existence, and it is the essence of the thing, standing in potency to a distinct act of existence, that accounts for the potentiality of creatures and thereby distinguishes them from God, who is not so composed."

Aesthetics, in other words describes the relationship between existence and essence in an object which gives pleasure when perceived. The ultimate aesthetic experience is known as the beatific vision, which occurs when the soul beholds God as He is, as absolute essence and necessary existence. By providing the subjective element of perception, Aquinas perfected the objectivist aesthetics of his predecesor and mentor Albertus Magnus without in any way destroying it. *Gratia non tollit naturam sed perficit* was a lesson that English gentlemen had to learn all over again in the expensive school of experience thanks to the nominalism which William of Ockham had spread throughout the entire body of Scholasticism within a hundred years of the Angelic Doctor's death.

Being himself a certified English gentleman, Scruton jumps from his misunderstanding of Aquinas as promoting a theological aesthetics to the third Earl of Shaftesbury who totally subjectivized beauty by associating it with feelings of the sublime. After dismissing Aquinas, Scruton refers us to the third Earl of Shaftesbury, whose *Characteristics* (1711) marks the date when modern aesthetics "took a great step forward."

The subjective element which Aquinas introduced when he said that "we call something beautiful when we gain pleasure from contemplating it as an individual object, for its own sake, and in its presented form" now completely eclipses the ontological link to Being which was forged when beauty became a transcendental because the English don't do ontology. Germans do do it, but Immanuel Kant's belief in the unknowability of the *Ding an Sich*, in this case the object which is the work of art, precluded any objective aesthetics, and accelerated the subjectivism which the English had introduced with Edmund Burke's notion of the Sublime.

Blinded by his own ethnocentrism, Scruton denounces the Counter-Reformation and its artistic implementation in the Baroque masterpieces which healed the wound of Iconoclasm throughout Europe as "theatrical insincerity." Once again English ethnocentrism becomes the category of the mind which rules out some of the world's greatest art and architecture. It in fact rules out the entire baroque period, including masterpieces like the chapel at Kloster Melk on the Danube, as well as the art which decorated these churches. Many words come to mind when viewing Tintoretto or Titian's *noli me tangere*, or his Mary Magdalene, but "good manners" is not one of them. Over and over again, English manners becomes the opaque lens through which we strain to perceive beauty, thereby distorting it beyond recognition, and worse, relegating it by default to the crude subjectivism which claims that it

exists only "in the mind of the beholder."

Scruton is reluctant to take on the aesthetic implications of Thomistic ontology or the exuberance of Baroque architecture and painting because the English prefer the canons of polite behavior: "People who are always in praise and pursuit of the beautiful are an embarrassment, like people who make a constant display of their religious faith. Somehow, we feel, such things should be kept for our exalted moments, and not paraded in company, or allowed to spill out over dinner. Scruton can describe well the attitude of the English Philistine even if he can't help but capitulate in the end to his standards. Scruton can't deal with modernity as the repudation of art and beauty either. This leads him to conclude that art can be ugly. He squares this circle by referring to Schoenberg's music, Picasso's painting and Guenther Grass's prose as "meaningful works of recent times," which "have been downright ugly and even offensive in their raw-nerve impact."

ART AND RATIONALITY

In 1879, a Spanish nobleman by the name of Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola was busy cataloging the detritus at the entrance of a cave on his property when he heard a call from his eight-year-old daughter who had wandered farther into the kilometer-long cavern. Instead of following the example of her father and examining the floor of the cave, Sautuola's daughter looked up and discovered that she was in what looked like a large hall whose ceiling was covered with paintings of now extinct animals.

In 1880, Sautuola published a report on his discovery expecting acclaim, but his *Breves apuntes sobre algunos objetos prehistóricos de la provincia de Santander* ("Notes on some prehistoric objects in the Santander region") was immediately subjected to an attack by a group of French archeologists who accused Sautuola of fraud, reasoning that "cave men" were not capable of the artistic sophistication exhibited in the Altamira caves. It wasn't until 22 years after his publication and a number of years after his death that Sautuola found posthumous vindication when E. de Cartailach, a French archeologist, published *Les cavernes ornées de dessins. La grotte d'Altamira, Espagne. «Mea culpa» d'un sceptique*. It was from that moment that the cave gained a key place in international prehistoric research.

By the 1920s, the "cave man" had become such an established figure in the modern mind that H.G. Wells dedicated the beginning of his *History of the World*, which was published in 1922, to fanciful speculation on the details of his life which was long on promoting sexual primitivism but short on describing the one thing we knew about the cave men who actually lived in Altamira, which was their art. G. K. Chesterton, who studied art at the Slade School in London and could tell from experience the actual skill that went into the cave paintings, expressed his frustration at Wells' materialism by claiming in *The Everlasting Man*, that "the simplest lesson" we can derive from the newly discovered European cave paintings is that "Art is the signature of man."

"The simplest lesson" we can derive from the newly discovered European cave paintings is that "Art is the signature of man."

Art is a manifestation of rationality, which renders man uniquely "separate from nature." Because of that distance, man can depict nature in ways that are abstract, symbolic, and representative. The image Chesterton used to convey that rationality was the mirror. "Reindeer man could draw and the reindeer could not" because man possessed "a mind that is like a mirror." The human mind, Chesterton continues:

> is like a mirror because it is truly a thing of reflection. It is like a mirror because in it alone all the other shapes can be seen like shining shadows in a vision. Above all, it is like a mirror because it is the only thing of its kind. Other things may resemble it or resemble each other in various ways; other things may excel it or excel each other in various ways; just as in the furniture of a room a table may be round like a mirror or a cupboard may be larger than a mirror. But the mirror is the only thing that can contain them all. Man is the microcosm; man is the measure of all things; man is the image of God. These are the only real lessons to be learnt in the cave. . . .

The word which Plato used to refer to the mind's ability to reflect

what the eye sees is *mimesis*, which means imitation. Art is first and foremost imitation of nature, which in Plato's view is divided between the sublunary realm of becoming which was characterized by constant change and the superlunary realm of forms, which did not change at all. Knowledge meant discovering a form which could be apprehended only by the mind. The human eye could not see a form.

Since art was a form of making rather than thinking, man took a form which his mind had imported from the superlunary realm of forms and imposed that form on matter to create whatever it was he was making. So, in the case of a bed, the artisan made a bed out of wood based on the idea of a bed which he apprehended as existing in the realm of forms. For Plato, the imitation involved in the art of painting a picture meant that the artist imitated an imitation. So, the true bed, to give Plato's example, existed, first of all, in the realm of forms. The artisan or carpenter built the real bed based on that ideal model. The artist, at this point, painted a picture of the bed which the carpenter had made, creating something that was "twice removed from reality."

Plato's understanding led to problems almost immediately because the act of imitation wasn't as simple as Plato said it was. Phidias, the most renowned of all Greek sculptors, created a statue of Zeus which was considered one of the seven wonders of the world, but no one could claim that he had ever seen Zeus. How then had he created his image if art is imitation? In creating his statue of Zeus, Phidias obviously had a human model in mind, but in choosing that model, Phidias had to make certain artistic decisions. Zeus had to be not only a man but a man of a certain age and character. He had to be old enough to look as if he possessed wisdom but young enough to exhibit physical power. Phidias could imitate aspects of reality which he had seen in figures like the wise Athenian ruler Pericles, whose reign corresponded to Phidias's career as an artist, but this wasn't particularly helpful because we don't know whether Pericles' face and body embodied the characteristics Phidias wanted to convey. Leon Battista Alberti, the 15th century Renaissance man par excellence who wrote treatises on painting, sculpture, and architecture, claimed that Pericles' head was too long and that sculptors dealt with this defect by portraying him wearing a helmet.

Cultural conservatism is "limiting and presumptuous" because it is ultimately a form of "cultural nostalgia" which "reduces to the human what should be divine."

If Pericles were his model for Zeus, Phidias would have to make adjustments to what he saw so that his statue could correspond to the reality of the form he wanted to convey, but this was then the exact opposite of what Plato had described as artistic activity. If art was confined to imitation, who gave the artist the right to correct the form? And according to what criteria did he correct it? Plato's aesthetics was unable to answer these questions because, ultimately, Phidias's statue of Zeus corresponded, not to any pre-existing eternal form as simple as a bed, but to an idea in Phidias's mind which he then either imposed or uncovered in the stone.

In this regard, Phidias was no different than Michelangelo, who would claim some 2,000 years later that "I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free." Michelangelo may have seen the angel in the marble, but he, like Phidias, who never saw Zeus, never saw David. If the image were in the mind or in the stone, what role did the form play in its inception? Did Michelangelo discover David in the block of marble which had been mutilated by a previous sculptor? Or did he impose his idea of David upon it? Either way, no one else had been able to carve that statue. No one had ever seen anything like Michelangelo's David before because until Michelangelo took a chisel to that block of imperfect marble no one had the skill to render the human anatomy to such a degree of perfection.

Artists dealt with ideas, but these ideas had to find expression, if the artist was a sculptor, in obdurate blocks of stone, which conditioned the sculptor's ability to mirror reality. Because stone in this regard was a singularly intractable medium, it lent itself quite naturally to portraying human beings as Platonic forms. We have statues of Plato and Aristotle but no real in-

The Venus of Willendorf



dication of what these men actually looked like because stone lends itself more to formal considerations than concrete realities. The statue lends itself to portrayals of man as embodying wisdom (or power) or woman embodying beauty rather than the physical characteristics which allow us to say that the man being portrayed was obviously Pericles or Plato or Socrates.

The way in which sculpture lent itself to a portrayal of platonic forms can be seen in one of the earliest extant statues, the Venus of Willendorf, a 4.4 inch-tall clay figure which was discovered near the lower Austrian town of Krems in 1908. The 30,000-year-old figure is obviously an example of mimesis as Plato would have defined the term. The figure is clearly identifiable as a woman because of the exaggerated portrayal of breasts and buttocks. Those exaggerated characteristics would most probably not have been typical of women who were condemned to live according to the exigencies of a hunter-gatherer existence common in this part of Europe during the paleolithic period.

In his portrayal of modern-day paleolithic hunter-gatherers in South Africa in the film *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, director Jamie Uys has the San tribesman Xi speculate on how much effort it would take to feed a female European schoolteacher whose figure was nowhere near the heroic proportions of the Willendorf Venus. If he had chosen to render an accurate portrait of an actual woman alive at that time, the artist who made the Venus of Willendorf would have ended up with a small lean figure whose sexuality was not as apparent as that embodied in the Venus statue because of things like diet and the effort it took to gather food. Instead, he chose to emphasize certain characteristics because they conformed to his understanding of the Platonic form of the female, whose essence was bound up with fertility, the ability to bring new life into the world, and the ability to nurture it.

The Venus of Willendorf has large breasts but no face, which signifies that her most important function had nothing to do with individuality, as our artist understood that term. The dichotomy of face vs. genitalia would re-emerge in the Renaissance as the psychological drama of that era and once posed would never go away. Courbet's *L'origine du monde* is a late example where the genitalia have completely eclipsed the face, in a throwback to the very origins of art. The testimony of the Venus of Willendorf is that the essence of woman was fertility. How female fertility connected with female rationality was not clear to the artist who created the Venus of Willendorf, and so he left her face blank.

From its earliest manifestation as sculpture in human history, mimesis was more concerned with portraying what we would call essence rather than existence. The details of this particular sculpture, in this instance the large breasts, were important not because they were typical in any crudely empirical sense of the term, but because they functioned as a visible symbol of the ineffable nature of woman, namely her ability to give birth and nurture life. The Willendorf Venus allowed the mind to perceive simultaneously what was both essential and at the same time existentially mysterious about woman in visible form.

Plato's understanding of essence was more accurate than his understanding of existence, but both missed the mark in ways that would take centuries of aesthetic speculation to rectify. The distinction between essence and existence was not part of the philosophical vocabulary of Plato's era. Instead of making that crucial distinction, Plato relegated the realm of essence, which never changed, to a literal place above the moon and the realm of existence to an equally literal place below it. Art, as a form of imitation, oscillated between the two poles of existence and essence in ways that Plato could not define in a way that did justice to actual artistic activity because he lacked an accurate understanding of the nature of Being as being made up of essence and existence. Beauty, as a result, was "fleet and swift, more fugitive than the passing flowers of Spring," as the late Roman Platonist Boethius would maintain. Because it lacked an ontological home, beauty sometimes appeared as a manifestation of the mind which beheld it, in which case it was referred to as the sublime. In this instance, aesthetics

degenerated into the subjectivism that is epitomized by the saying, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder." When beauty was construed as a manifestation of the object which the mind beheld, it threatened to degenerate into formalism based on mathematical models.

This uncertainty would haunt aesthetics as long as Plato held sway over man's understanding of art. Because sculpture was a function of an especially obdurate medium, sculpture never really transcended the Platonic understanding of form as something either imposed on or derived from the medium, and the statue never got beyond the generic representation, which it did best. Hence, its use in public monuments, like Michelangelo's David which symbolized the Florentine Renaissance understanding of man in all of his finely proportioned grace and glory, was undeniably heroic, but it was unlikely that you would bump into him on the streets of Florence; whereas it was entirely possible that you would recognize Lucrezia Buti as the model for one of Fra Lippo Lippi's Madonnas because painting as a medium was more attuned to portraying existence rather than essence. Beauty resulted from the tension between the two, and art would fail in its attempt to achieve beauty whenever it was too willing to sacrifice one at the expense of the other.

Plato's understanding of the relationship between form and mimesis would dominate the understanding of art in the West for over a millennium and a half not because it was particularly accurate but because it was based on an undeniable reality. Nature could not be reduced to component parts like atoms, because the component parts which made up any whole were always coming into and going out of existence. If the whole were no more than the sum of its perishable parts, then the whole had no continuity, which meant that there was no whole. But that contradicted our experience of both nature and ourselves. We came into being; we grew because we ate food, but we were not reducible to the food we ate, and we knew that we were the same person we were as a child even if all of the molecules in that child's body had ceased to exist and were replaced by others, because a transcendent principle of unity bound us together. The name of that principle was *psyche* or *anima* or the soul, and when that animating principle left the body at death, the creature which was made up of those parts ceased to exist.

Knowledge meant discovering a form which could be apprehended only by the mind. The human eye could not see form.

Plato believed that souls pre-existed the body and that souls were called to inhabit bodies in the way that pilots occupied ships. Aristotle viewed the relationship between the body and the soul differently, claiming that the soul was the form of the body or the body's first act rather than a pre-existent angel which inhabited it, but he never denied that the body was animated by a form or principle which governed its functions or that those functions stopped when the soul ceased to animate it. The atomists couldn't explain why the atoms which composed the human body held together at one point but did not at another because they lacked any understanding of immaterial form.

Plato clearly understood "the things of nature in their development" had to be directed "by their 'ideas.'" The Renaissance understanding of the conflict between Plato and Aristotle is best summarized by the central figures in Raphael's painting of *The School of Athens*, in which Plato, on the viewer's left, points upward to the realm of forms while holding a book on geometry, while Aristotle, on the viewer's right, extends his hand to make a horizontal plane while holding his book on ethics, indicating that Aristotle is intent on defending "the world here below" because he understands that "we cannot deprive matter of its place in reality." The idea is not imposed upon matter; "it actually works immediately within matter." The term Aristotle gave to this working within matter is "*entelechy*," which is "the inner texture, which seals the parts into a cohesive whole." Because of his observations of nature, Aristotle "could no longer admit that these bodies were only copies or images. The intelligent effort of this matter-in-genesis actually deserved the name of reality." Being had become "form in matter." That form or entelechy provides "the structuring power of unity found in the 'idea.'" Unlike

Temptation by William Adolphe Bouguereau



Plato's artist, who imposes a form on intransigent matter, Aristotle's artist liberates the form from matter which has "a vocation for being," in a way that is best symbolized by Michelangelo's unfinished sculpture of the slave, where "the rough-hewn 'prisoners' attempt to free their limbs from the stone." Beauty ensues when "the form springs from the matter." The artist who imitates nature must capture its soul, understood as being's first act in animate creatures, and rationality in human beings, in analogous fashion to the way that God "instills life in the organs, and with them confers on the individual being its specific powers of acting."

Plato's student Aristotle disagreed with the former's understanding of the nature of form, but he never denied its existence because to do so would have meant plunging the world into the total flux which the Greeks called chaos, about which nothing could be said. Plato based his understanding of flux on the writings of Heraclitus, who "compared reality to a river, because things never cease to change, in an uninterrupted flow." Heraclitus, however, also claimed that "a *logos*, in other words a 'reason,'" provided unity and order to this flux.

Plato described this unifying order as the form or *eidos* or idea. Heraclitus anticipated not only Plato but the entire subsequent history of philosophy when he wrote: "There exists but a single wisdom: to know the thought [*logos*] that guides all things through all."

No matter how helpful the concept of form was in describing the relationship between the soul and the body, the notion of the pre-existent form which explained generic things like beds was not particularly helpful in describing Phidias's statue of Zeus because that statue portrayed something that no one had ever seen before because it had, until the moment of its creation, never existed. That thing which never existed, at least according to Plato, wasn't something trivial. In the case of Phidias's portrayal of Zeus, it epitomized all that the Greeks held sacred when it came to their beliefs and the form of government which imposed those beliefs on the citizens of Athens. Not only that, Phidias accomplished that task so convincingly that those who looked at his statue referred to it as beautiful, a concept that was as obvious as it was difficult to define.

Aristotle's understanding of the soul would have metaphysical and, more importantly, aesthetic consequences when Aristotle rejected Plato's understanding of art as twice removed from reality and proposed instead a new understanding based on the idea that "art imitates nature." It turns out that a work of art like a building had two causes—one material, one spiritual. "The cause of the building is the materials, surely; but even more it is the building that is in the mind of the architect." He said: "The building comes from the building, the material from the immaterial." Matter had an aptitude for form, and the mind had the ability to confer existence upon those forms because Aristotle understood that matter and form, or existence and essence, did not reside in separate realms which could not communicate with each other. Both existence and essence were intimately connected with each other as the twin attributes of Being. This intellectual breakthrough had significant aesthetic implications because now the artist "does not 'impose' these ideas on matter" because "matter is the desire for all forms." What undergirds this new understanding of aesthetics is the as yet undiscovered idea of creation,

which allows the artist to imitate God as "the greatest of all artists," who "brings forth the forms corresponding to the divine ideas from 'within' matter itself," because of "its limitless capacity to be shaped and molded."

This meant—at least implicitly, in ways that Plato could not understand—that existence conferred Being on essence. Because Aristotle intuited this possibility, even though he lacked a clear understanding of creation, meant that he could "see God in the world," and prepare the way for a new understanding of art as the imitation of nature:

> Aristotle was the first to compare the artist to nature. Everyone knows his celebrated formula, "Art imitates nature" (*Physics* 2.2; 194a21-22). The context in which this sentence echoes makes it clear that Aristotle did not wish to establish a relationship of identity between the respective products of art and nature. He never declared that works of art ought to be copies, duplicates, slavish imitations of things produced by nature. Instead, he located "imitation" in the generative process of both. Art now involved capturing the form of being which denotes "the activity that things perform in order to "hold fast in themselves," over against other things that perform the same act for themselves," rather than the act of imposing an extra-terrestrial pre-existent form on recalcitrant matter, which if anything disguised its splendor rather than revealing it.

Both Plato and Aristotle believed that the world was eternal, and as a result they thought it was un-created. This misunderstanding would inhibit both metaphysical and aesthetic speculation all the way to the 13th century, when Aquinas explained that even if the world were eternal it still came into being, in his opusculum *De aeternitate mundi contra murmurantes.* Aristotle's works were lost to the west until the 13th century when the commentaries of Avicenna and Averroes arrived in Paris. Plato's concept of form dominated aesthetics by default. Deprived of any sense of creation and any accurate understanding of Being as existence and essence, aesthetics took a turn toward formalism, seeing in geometrical figures the ratios which could be extrapolated to the construction of buildings.

TASTE VS TRUTH

In the end, Scruton abandons "objective standards" of beauty and settles on taste as his arbiter because "taste is rooted in a broader cultural context, and cultures . . . are not universal" and because "any attempt to lay down objective standards threatens the very enterprise that it purports to judge." But wait, Scruton qualifies his position once again when he writes that:

> it is important to recognize that cultural variation does not imply the absence of cross-cultural universals. Nor does it imply that those universals, if they exist, are not rooted in our nature, or that they do not feed into our rational interests at a very fundamental level. Symmetry and order; proportion; closure; convention; harmony, and also novelty and excitement: all these seem to have a permanent hold on the human psyche."

But, no, Scruton is not done. He then changes his affirmation of the universals which "seem to have a permanent hold on the human pysche," by removing beauty from its ontological foundation and relegating beauty, which was once a transcendental, back to the eye of the beholder when he makes the "important observation" that "in the matter of aesthetic judgement, objectivity and universality come apart. In science and morality, the search for objectivity is the search for universally valid results—results that must be accepted by every rational being." But that is not the case with beauty.

Yet, it turns out that Scruton does not abandon objective standards of beauty after all. He concludes by saying "In the last analysis there is as much objectivity in our judgements of beauty as there is in our judgements of virtue and vice. Beauty is therefore as firmly rooted in the scheme of things as goodness. It speaks to us, as virtue speaks to us, of human fulfilment: not of things that we want, but of things that we ought to want, because human nature requires them." This, of course, contradicts what Scruton just said. In the final analysis, Scruton has to appeal to ethnocentrism once again to rescue himself from the snare of his own self-contradictions. He does this by invoking the name of David Hume, the Scottish skeptic and Whig place holder who feels that:

> seeing an object as beautiful is a matter of 'gilding or staining it with the colours borrowed from internal sentiment'. The standard, if it exists, does not lie in the qualities of the object but in the sentiments of the judge. So, Hume suggests, let us get away from the fruitless discussion of beauty, and simply concentrate on

> the qualities we admire, and ought to admire, in a critic—qualities such as delicacy and discernment.

In writing about his own conversion from an ethnocentric Anglicanism to universal Catholicism, Thomas Pink, professor of philosophy at King's College, London, describes going through the reverse of Scruton's de-conversion story, a process which began when he as a schoolboy read John Cardinal Newman's book on the development of doctrine. Anglicanism was by default ethnocentric because it was based on a deliberate suppression of universality. Newman's book, on the other hand:

> showed me that the contingency of history could unfold and reveal something eternal, not a mere object of memory, and not the property of a particular nation. My school religion was not really presenting me with this at all. The state and cultural establishment in which I had been brought up had tried to contain Christianity by seeking to suppress this very universality, and in particular – and most significantly it seemed to me – by denying the transcendent in the Eucharist. . . . When asked why one should be an Anglican, a friend and former pupil of the chaplain's, a master at another similar school, told me that it was Anglicanism that was practised throughout the ancient cathedrals and parishes of England; and so that was the form of Christianity that was most truly English. . . . In that library I lost my belief in the form of Christianity practised by my family and many of my teachers – as expressive of allegiance to a particular state and of membership of a particular nation. Nothing since has led me to regret this. It only anticipated what was to come: the continued decline of Anglicanism into a doctrinally chaotic sect that now clearly bores and embarrasses the political and cultural elite that once supported it; and the increasing transformation of the British state itself into a real enemy of Christianity. . . . Just as for a Christian attachment to earthly goods must be conditional, so too must attachment to earthly states and cultures.

The artist can manifest both existence and essence only through mimesis or imitation of nature. If there is no object to be portrayed, there is no mimesis, and if there is no mimesis, there is no beauty.

Pink concludes that: "Political allegiance and cultural identity can never be allowed to define Christianity or to decide the content of its teaching." Without mentioning his name, Pink attacks Scruton's "religious form of cultural conservatism," because it "seeks to defend Christianity as, in effect, a local human tradition. It can take Anglican form, and celebrate a national idyll of prayer book and common law, or it can equally well take a more superficially Catholic form, and celebrate Christianity as the essence of a European culture." Cultural conservatism is "limiting and presumptuous" because it is ultimately a form of "cultural nostalgia" which "reduces to the human what should be divine."

In the final analysis, beauty must emerge from the contemplation of an object which manifests maximal essence and maximal existence in an especially striking way. The artist can only manifest both existence and essence through mimesis or imitation of nature. If there is no object to be portrayed, there is no mimesis, and if there is no mimesis, there is no beauty. Abstract geometric patterns of the sort we find in Piet Mondrian err in the direction of form at the expense of life, or essence at the expense of existence. Photography errs in the opposite direction, being a mechanical representation of existence at the expense of form. Even when the photographer takes a picture of a meticulously arranged still life, the camera lacks the synthesizing power of the human eye and mind. As a machine, it can reproduce images but it can't synthesize. For the 30,000 years since our forebears painted on the roof of the caves at Altamira, art has oscillated between those two poles.

Ethnocentrism ruined Scruton's aesthetics because it cut him off from an understanding of being, but more importantly because in the final analysis, ethnic loyalty to inferior thinkers like the third Earl of Shaftesbury and the skeptical Scot David Hume overruled Scruton's allegiance to both truth and beauty.



Endnotes Available by Request or Online at www.CultureWars.com

Bullets

▮ Pope Francis seems orthodox wherever Catholicism coincides with the leftist agenda.

▮ The Supreme Court says the Constitution bans the execution of rapists but creates a right to execute those conceived in rape. What's wrong with this picture?

▮ Is the slogan *Not My President* still acceptable now that Joe Biden's in office?

▮ Another Covid Statistic. While being treated for covid-19 at Antelope Valley Hospital in Lancaster, CA, Jesse Martinez grabbed an oxygen tank and bludgeoned his 82-year-old Catholic roommate to death because he was praying. It's a microcosm of California's treatment of the Church during the pandemic.

▮ There is no substitute for the family for raising children.

▮ Say It Loud: We Kill and We're Proud. "We are a proud abortion provider," says Planned Parenthood president Alexis McGill Johnson; "when we say, 'It's a small part of what we do,' what we're doing is actually stigmatizing it. … I don't like to marginalize it in that way."

▮ In the first round, the $1,200 stimulus checks could be seized to pay child support arrears but Deadbeat Dads got to keep the second round's $600 payments.

▮ Whiffing a faint scent of racism, Loyola University Maryland recently removed Flannery O'Connor's name from a dorm. Will neighboring Johns Hopkins shed its name now that it knows its namesake owned slaves?

▮ Stop the Steal? Trump's telephone call demanding that Georgia election officials "find 11,780 votes" was clearer evidence of an attempt to steal the election than anything produced by his lawyers.

▮ An insurrection in which the only shot was fired by the police? Not much of an insurrection.

▮ Joe Biden tweeted "No one can tell me that if it had been a group of Black Lives Matter protesters yesterday that they wouldn't have been treated very differently than the mob that stormed the Capitol." Did Ashli Babbit die as a result of white privilege, Joe?



▮ Israel First. Among his last acts, billionaire Jewish gambling magnate, GOP megadonor, and unabashed Israel backer Sheldon Adelson flew the spy Jonathan Pollard to a hero's welcome in Israel. He also delivered billions to Israel through American politicians he bought. Now he's gone to his eternal reward.

▮ Democracy is a means not an end.

▮ Rep. Emanuel Cleaver opened the 117th Congress with a prayer that ended "Amen and Awomen." What about non-binaries? It's a wonder he hasn't changed his name to Emanandwomanuel.

▮ Plutocracy, not Democracy. "In the end, it was two California billionaires who pulled the plug on President Trump," chortled the *New York Times*, referring to Twitter's Jack Dorsey and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg.

▮ A U.K. judge ruled the U.S. can't extradite Wikileaks founder Julian Assange on spy charges due to a suicide risk. Somewhere Jeffrey Epstein is laughing. Pardon Assange.

▮ John Bolton said Trump "has blood on his hands" after Capitol Police killed Ashli Babbit. This from a man who spent years pushing Trump to get blood on his hands by starting wars?

▮ Amid the media's gushing glorification of the heroism and suffering of individual police officers in D.C., why hasn't the cop who killed Ashli Babbit been identified?

▮ What happened to cries to defund the police?

▮ Afraid that people might speak freely, Amazon, Apple, and Google eliminated Parler, the "free speech" app alternative to Twitter. Soon Alexa, Siri, and Google Assistant will be programmed to slap you upside the head if you say something they don't like.

▮ Big Tech is intent on transforming The Silent Majority into The Silenced Majority.

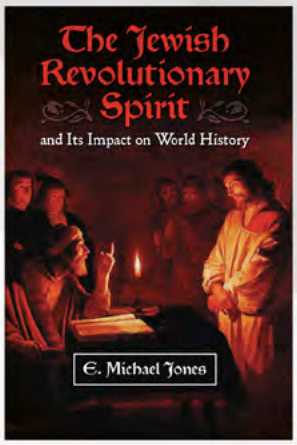
▮ Fascism of the left justifies itself as necessary to prevent fascism of the right.

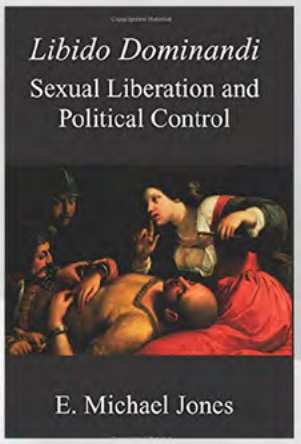
▮ Trump won in 2016 because so many voters disliked Hillary. Biden won in 2020 because so many hate Trump.

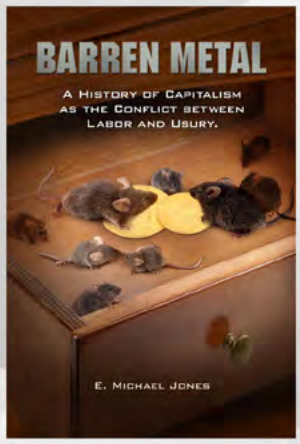
▮ Trump would still be president if he weren't so boorish; and the Republicans would control the Senate and probably the House too.

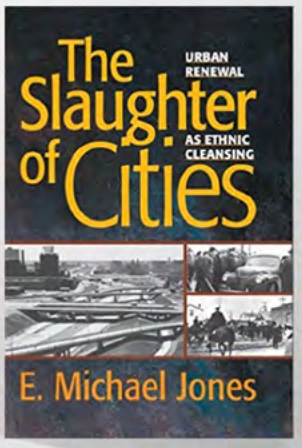
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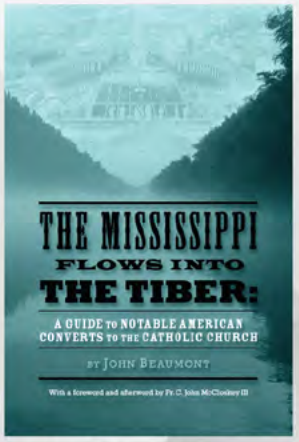
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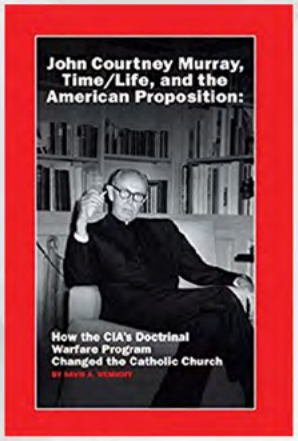


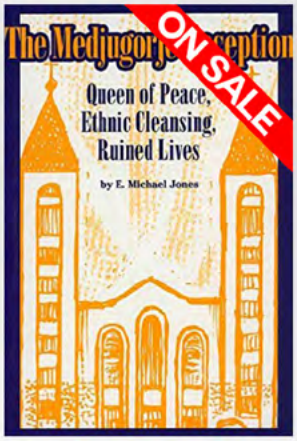


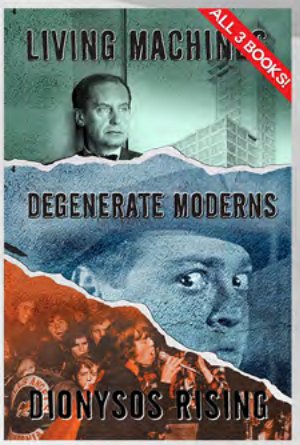












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